







# PRIESTS, WOMEN, AND FAMILIES.

BY

J. MICHELET.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

(FOURTH EDITION),

WITH THE AUTHOR'S PERMISSION,

BY

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## NOTICE.

THE increasing success of my Original Translations of M. MICHELET'S Works, "*Le Prêtre, la Femme, et la Famille*," and "*Le Peuple*," having given rise to several others, I take this opportunity of stating, in justice to the public and myself, that my translations have *alone* received the sanction and approbation of M. MICHELET, who has honoured me with several letters, all expressive of his gratitude and satisfaction.

The intimacy that subsists between MM. MICHELET and QUINET is well known; and the subjoined extract from a letter of the latter will suffice to show the opinion which both of the illustrious Authors entertain of the Translator's labours:—  
"Your translations are certainly the best that have been made, or ever will be made, of any of our works. I cannot tell you how much I am pleased with them in every respect. *Conscience, fidélité, exactitude, naturel, elles me semblent tout rassembler.* M. MICHELET and I will send you, without delay, proof sheets of all our works, &c. &c. &c.—E. QUINET, *Paris* Nov. 1845."

C. COCKS.

*Bordeaux, April 4. 1846.*



# ADVERTISEMENT.

TO

THE FOURTH EDITION OF THE ORIGINAL.

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THIS edition has been carefully revised by the Author. After a very searching perusal, he has found but one contestable fact, which he has now suppressed.

He has read over most of the citations in the authors quoted, Saint François de Sales, Bossuet, &c. ; but has not found any mistakes. Moreover, he almost always adds a date to the number of the page (especially when he quotes letters), which enables the reader to consult the different editions.

# PREFACE

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

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THIS powerful work, written by one of the first historians of the age, and now creating so extraordinary a sensation in France, where, in spite of the yells of fanaticism, and the thunders of the pulpit, it has passed triumphantly through three editions in less than as many months, distributing its fifty thousand copies into every corner of the kingdom, cannot fail to be a source of interest\* and edification to the greater part of my fellow-countrymen.

Without presuming to offer any gratuitous and uncalled-for observations of my own respecting the nature and merits of this remarkable production, but confining myself strictly to the duty of a translator, I merely beg permission to state, that as, in works of this description, every sentence, nay, every word, is liable to be quoted and argued upon, I have thought it expedient to follow my author as closely as possible, and to attempt to give not only his real sentiments, but, as far as our idiom allowed me, his own peculiar style and expression; so that the English reader may still have, as it were, his French author before him, changed in nothing save his costume.

\* It may not be superfluous to inform the English reader, that this is also the opinion of the talented author himself, who, in an obliging letter to the translator (April 18. 1845), expresses himself as follows:—" Cette traduction, au reste, ne serait pas sans intérêt à Londres, au moment où le jésuitisme travaille si follement l'Angleterre. Rien de plus étrange que leurs espérances chimériques de sa conversion prochaine," &c. — I take this opportunity of publicly thanking Mr. Michelet, for his extreme kindness in forwarding me early copies of the third edition of this work, by means of which I have been enabled the sooner to complete my translation.— TRANSL.

I may also add that my translation has been purposely delayed, in order to have the advantage of containing the preface to the third edition, in which it was easy to foresee that the author would reply to the virulent attacks that have been made against both his book and himself, by the dark swarm whom he had molested, in his generous efforts to tear away the foul mask with which superstition and hypocrisy had disguised the glorious face of religion, and to show her, in all her effulgent purity, to the admiration of the world.

C. C. .

Bordeaux,  
April 1. 1845.

# PREFACE

## TO THE THIRD EDITION.

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THIS book has produced upon our adversaries an effect we had not anticipated. It has made them lose every sense of propriety and self-respect :— nay, more, even that respect for the sanctuary which it was their duty to teach us. From the pulpits of their crowded churches they preach against a living man, calling him by his name, and invoking upon the author and his book the hatred of those who knew not how to read, and who will never read this work. The heads of the clergy must, indeed, have felt themselves touched to the quick, to let loose these furious preachers upon us.

We have hit the mark too fairly, it should seem. Woman !— this was the point on which they were sensitive. Direction, the spiritual guidance of women, is the vital part of ecclesiastical authority ; and they will fight for it to the death. Strike, if you will, elsewhere, but not here. Attack the dogma—all well and good ; they may, perhaps, make a show of violence \*, or perpetrate some empty declamation ; but if you should happen to meddle with this particular point, the thing becomes serious, and they no longer contain themselves. It is a sad sight to see pontiffs, elders of the people, gesticulating, stamping, foaming at the mouth, and gnashing their teeth.†

- They will not even take this trouble. A young eclectic, for instance, who declares himself averse to all revealed religions, and can hardly tolerate them provisionally, but who happens at the same time to attack an adversary of the clergy, is caressed and embraced by them.

† This will not appear exaggerated to those who have read the furious libel of the Bishop of Chartres. A newspaper asks me why I did not prosecute him for defamation. This mad violence is much less guilty than

Young men, do not look ; epileptic convulsions have occasionally a contagious effect upon the spectators. Let us leave them, and depart ; we must resume our studies without loss of time : "art is long, life is short."

I remember having read in the correspondence of Saint Charles Borroméo, that one of his friends, a person of authority and importance, having censured some Jesuit or other who was too fond of confessing nuns, the latter came in a fury to insult him. The Jesuit knew his strength : being a preacher then in vogue, well off at court, and still better at the court of Rome, he thought he need not stand upon ceremony. He went to the greatest extremes, was violent, insolent, as much as he pleased : his grave censor remained cool. The Jesuit could no longer keep within the bounds of decency, and made use of the vilest expressions. The other, calm and firm, answered nothing ; he let him continue his declamation, threats, and violent gestures ; he only looked at his feet. "Why were you always looking at his feet?" inquired an eye-witness, as soon as the Jesuit was gone. "Because," replied the noble man calmly, "I fancied I saw the cloven hoof peeping out every now and then ; and this man, who seemed possessed with a devil, might be the tempter himself, disguised as a Jesuit."

One prelate predicts in sorrow that we are sending the priests to martyrdom.

the treacherous insinuations they make in their books and newspapers, in the saloons, &c. Now they attribute to me whatever has been done by other Michelets, to whom I am not even related (for instance, Michelet of Languedoc, a poet and soldier under the restoration) ; now they pretend to believe, though I had told them the contrary at the end of my preface, that this book is my lecture of 1844. Then, again, they get up a little petition from Marseilles, to pray for the dismissal of the professor. So far from wishing to stifle the voice of my adversaries, I have claimed for their writings the same liberty I asked for my own. *Lesson of the 27th of February, 1845* :—"I see among you the greater part of those who had aided me to maintain in this chair the liberty of discussion. We will respect this liberty in our adversaries. This is not chivalry, it is simply our duty. It is, moreover, essential to the cause of truth, that no objection be suppressed ; but that each party may be at liberty to state their reasons. You may be sure, that truth will prevail and conquer. We pass away ; but truth lasts, and triumphs. Yet, as long as her adversaries may have any thing to say, her triumph is mingled with doubt."

Alas! this martyrdom is what they themselves demand, either aloud or in secret, namely — marriage.

We think, without enumerating the too well known inconveniences of their present state, that if the priest is to advise the family, it is good for him to know what a family is; that as a married man (or a widower, which would be still better), of a mature age and experience, one who has loved and suffered, and whom domestic affections have enlightened upon the mysteries of moral life, which are not to be learned by guessing, he would possess at the same time more affection, and more wisdom.

It is true the defenders of the clergy have lately drawn such a picture of marriage, that many persons perhaps will henceforth dread the engagement. They have far exceeded the very worst things that novelists and modern socialists have ever said against the *legal union*. Marriage, which lovers imprudently seek as a confirmation of love, is, according to them, but a warfare: we marry in order to fight. It is impossible to degrade lower the virtue of matrimony. The sacrament of union, according to these doctors, is useless, and can do nothing unless a third party be always present between the partners — *i. e.* the combatants — to separate them.

It had been generally believed that two persons were sufficient for matrimony: but this is all altered; and we have the new system, as set forth by themselves, composed of three elements: 1st, *man*, the strong, the violent; 2dly, *woman*, a being naturally weak; 3dly, *the priest*, born a man, and strong, but who is kind enough to become weak and resemble woman; and who, participating thus in both natures, may interpose between them.

Interpose! interfere between two persons who were to be henceforth but one! This changes wonderfully the idea which, from the beginning of the world, has been entertained of marriage.

But this is not all; they avow that they do not pretend to make an impartial interference that might favour each of the parties, according to reason. No, they address themselves exclusively to the wife: she ~~it~~ is whom they undertake to protect

against her natural protector. They offer to league with her in order to transform the husband. If it were once firmly established that marriage, instead of being unity in two persons, is a league of one of them with a stranger, it would become exceedingly scarce. Two to one! the game would seem too desperate; few people would be bold enough to face the peril. There would be no marriages but for money; and these are already too numerous. People in difficulties would doubtless not fail to marry; for instance, a merchant placed by his pitiless creditor between marriage and a warrant.

To be transformed, re-made, remodelled, and changed in nature! A grand and difficult change! But there would be no merit in it, if it was not of one's free will, and only brought about by a sort of domestic persecution, or household warfare.

First of all, we must know whether transformation means amelioration, whether it be intended by transformation to ascend higher and higher in moral life, and become more virtuous and wise. To ascend would be well and good; but, if it should be to fall lower?

And first of all, the wisdom they offer us does not imply knowledge. "What is the use of knowledge and literature? They are mere toys of luxury, vain and dangerous ornaments of the mind, both strangers to the soul." Let us not contest the matter, but pass over this empty distinction that opposes the mind to the soul, as if ignorance was innocence, and as if they could have the gifts of the soul and heart with a poor, insipid, idiotic literature!

But where is their heart? Let us catch a glimpse of it. How is it that those who undertake to develop it in others dispense with giving any proof of it in themselves? But this living fountain of the heart is impossible to be hidden, if we really have it within us. It springs out in spite of every thing; if you were to stop it on one side, it would run out by the other. It is more difficult to be confined than the flowing of great rivers:—try to shut up the sources of the Rhone or Rhine! These are vain metaphors, and very ill-placed, I allow: to what deserts of Arabia must I not resort to find more suitable ones?

We are in a church : see the crowd, the dense mass of people who, after having wandered far, enter here weary and athirst, hoping to find some refreshment ; they wait with open mouths. Will there even be one small drop of dew ?

No ; a decent, proper, blunt-looking man ascends the pulpit : he will not affect them ; he confines himself to proofs. He makes a grand display of reasoning, with high logical pretensions and much solemnity in his premises. Then come sudden, sharp conclusions ; but for middle term there is none : “ These things require no proof.” Why, then, miserable reasoner, did you make so much noise about your proofs ?

Well ! do not prove ! only love ! and we will let you off every thing else. Say only one word from the heart to comfort this crowd. All that variegated mass of living heads, that you see so closely assembled around your pulpit are not blocks of stone, but so many living souls. Those yonder are young men, the rising generation, our future society. They are of happy dispositions, full of spirit, fresh and entire, such as God made them, and untamed ; they rush forward incautiously even to the very brink of precipices. What ! youth, danger, futurity, and hopes clouded with fear — does not all this move you ? Will nothing open your fatherly heart ?

Mark, too, that brilliant crowd of women and flowers : in all that splendour so delightful to the eye there is much suffering. I pray you to speak one word of comfort to them. You know they are your daughters, who come every evening so forlorn to weep at your feet. They confide in you, and tell you every thing ; you know their wounds. Try to find some consoling word — surely that cannot be so difficult. What man is there who, in seeing the heart of a woman bleeding before him, would not feel his own heart inspired with words to heal it ? A dumb man, for want of words, would find what is worth more, a flood of tears !

What shall we say of those who, in presence of so many desponding, sickly, and confiding persons, give them, as their only remedy, the spirit of an academy, glittering commonplaces, old paradoxes, Bonaparteism, socialism, and what not ? There is in all this, we must confess, a sad dryness, and a great want of feeling.



Ah! you *are* dry and harsh! I felt this the other day (it was in December last,) when I read on the walls, as I was passing by, an order from the archbishop. It was a case of suicide; a poor wretch had killed himself in the church of Saint-Gervais. Was it misery, passion, madness, spleen, or moral weakness in this melancholy season? No cause was mentioned; the body alone was there with the blood on the marble slabs; but no explanation. By what gradation of griefs, disappointments, and anguish had he been induced to commit this unnatural act? What steps of moral purgatory had he descended before he reached the bottom of the abyss? Who could say? No one. But any man with a gleam of imagination in his heart, sees in this solemn mystery something to make him weep and pray. That man is not Mr. Affre: read the mandate. There is compassion for the blood-stained church, and pity for the polluted stones; but for the dead only a malediction. But, whether a Christian or not, guilty or not, is he not still a man, my lord bishop? Could you not, whilst you were condemning suicide, let fall one word of pity by the way? No, no sentiment of humanity, nothing for the poor soul, which, besides its misfortune (which must have been terrible, indeed, since it could not support it), departs all alone and accursed, to attempt that perilous flight of the other life and judgment.—Ah! I hope that so much misery, and even this harshness \* after death, will balance something of his account! Another very different fact had given me some time before a similar impression.

I had gone on business to the house of the venerable Sister \* \* \*, who is so adored by the poor.

She was absent; and two persons, a lady and an aged priest, were waiting, like myself, in the small parlour. The lady seemed actuated by some motive of beneficence: the priest, as they are lords and masters in every house of charity, seemed to

\* This harshness was particularly conspicuous in the conduct of the archbishop towards the ecclesiastical library of Paris, which prints for all France. Mr. Affre's predecessors had never wished to put in force the *strictum jus*, the monopoly which a law seems to confer upon the bishops, against these pious and ancient establishments. They had feared they might be suspected of finding an enormous profit in it.

be quite at home, and to beguile the time, was writing letters at the sister's bureau. At the conclusion of every note, he listened to the lady for a moment. The latter, whose gentle face bore traces of grief, impressed one at once with the goodness of her disposition : perhaps she would not have attracted my attention, but there was something in her that interested me. Was it passion or grief? I overheard without listening—she had lost her son.

An only son, full of affection, spirits, and courage ; a young hero, who, leaving the polytechnic school, had abandoned every thing, riches, high life, pleasure, happiness, and such a mother ! And regardless alike of safety and danger, had rushed to Marseilles, thence to Algiers, to the enemy, and to death.

The poor woman, wholly occupied with this idea, snatched, from time to time, a little moment to put in a word ; she wanted to speak to him, and appeal to his compassion. The scene was infinitely touching and natural, without any theatrical effect. Her moderate grief and sighs, without tears, affected me the more.

She was evidently wasting her breath. The thoughts of the priest were elsewhere. It was not possible for him not to listen : he was forced to say something or other (the lady was rich, and her carriage was waiting at the door) ; but he got off as cheap as he could ; “ Yes, Madam, Providence tries us. It strikes us for our good. These are very painful trials,” &c. &c. Such vague and cold words did not discourage the lady ; she drew her chair nearer, thinking he would hear her better : “ Ah ! Sir, how shall I tell you ? Ah ! how can you understand so heavy a calamity ? ” She would have made a dead man weep.

Did you ever see the heart-rending sight of the poor pointer, that has been wounded by a shot, writhing at his master's feet, and licking his hands, as if praying to him to help him ? The comparison will appear, perhaps, strange to those who have not seen the reality. However, at that moment, I felt it in my heart. That woman, mortally wounded, yet so gentle in her grief, seemed to be writhing at the feet of the priest, and to entreat his compassion.

I looked at that priest: he was vulgar and unfeeling, such as we see so often, neither wicked nor good; there was nothing to indicate a heart of iron, but he was as if made of wood. I saw plainly that not one word of all which his ear had received had entered his soul. One sense was wanting. But why torment a blind man by speaking to him of colours? He answers vaguely; occasionally he may guess pretty nearly; but how can it be helped? he cannot see.

And do not think that the feelings of the heart can be guessed at more easily. A man without wife or child might study the mysterious working of a family in books and the world, for ten thousand years, without ever knowing one word about them. Look at these men; it is neither time, opportunity, nor facility that they lack to acquire knowledge; they pass their lives with women who tell them more than they tell their husbands; they know, and yet they are ignorant: they know all a woman's acts and thoughts, but they are ignorant precisely of what is the best and most intimate part of her character, and the very essence of her being. They hardly understand her as a lover (of God or man), still less as a wife, and not at all as a mother. Nothing is more painful than to see them sitting down awkwardly by the side of a woman to caress her child; their manner towards it is that of flatterers or courtiers — any thing but that of a father.

What I pity the most in the man condemned to celibacy, is not only the privation of the sweetest joys of the heart, but that a thousand objects of the natural and moral world are, and ever will be, a dead letter to him. Many have thought, by living apart, to dedicate their lives to science; but the reverse is the case: in such a morose and crippled life science is never fathomed; it may be varied and superficially immense; but it escapes, for it will not reside there. Celibacy gives a restless activity to researches, intrigues, and business; a sort of huntsman's eagerness, a sharpness in the subtilties of school-divinity and disputation; this is at least the effect it had in its prime. If it makes the senses keen and liable to temptation, certainly it does not soften the heart.\* Our terrorists in the fifteenth

\* The heart may be unfeeling, though the senses be very keen. It would

and sixteenth centuries were monks.\* Monastic prisons were always the most cruel.† A life systematically negative, a life without its functions, develops in man instincts that are hostile to life; he who suffers, is willing to make others suffer. The harmonious and fertile parts of our nature, which on the one hand incline to goodness, and on the other to genius and high invention, can hardly ever withstand this partial suicide.

Two classes of persons necessarily contract much insensibility—surgeons and priests. By constantly witnessing sufferings and death, we become by degrees dead in our sympathetic faculties. Let us, however, remark this difference, that the insensibility of the surgeon is not without its utility: if he was affected by his operation, he might tremble. The business of the priest, on the contrary, requires that he should be affected; sympathy would be generally the most efficacious remedy to cure the soul. But independently of what we have just said about the natural harshness of this profitless life, we must observe, that the priest, in contradiction with a society, the whole of whose progress he condemns, becomes less and less benevolent for the sinner and the rebel. The physician who does not like his patient is less likely than another to cure him.

It is a sad reflection to think that these men, who have so little sympathy, and who are, moreover, soured by contention, should happen to have in their hands the most gentle portion of mankind; that which has preserved the most affection, and ever remained the most faithful to nature, and which, in the very corruption of morals, is still the least corrupted by interest and hateful passions.

That is to say, that the least loving govern those who love the most.

In order to know well what use they make of this empire over women, which they claim as their own privilege, we must

be useless to try to find here a contradiction to the dangers I have pointed out in this book; it would only seem to be so.

\* For the fifteenth century, see, especially, my *History of France*, A. D. 1413.

† Mabillon, on *Monastic Imprisonment*, posthumous works, vol. ii. p. 327.

not confine ourselves to their flattering and wheedling ways with fashionable ladies, but inquire of the poor women whom they are able to treat unceremoniously, those, especially, who, being in convents, are at the mercy of the ecclesiastical superiors, and whom they keep under lock and key, and undertake to protect alone.

We are not quite satisfied with this protection. For a long time we thought all was right; we were even simple enough to say to ourselves that the law could see nothing amiss in this kingdom of grace. But hark! from those gentle asylums, those images of paradise, we hear sobs and sighs.

I shall not speak here of the convents that have become real houses of correction, nor of the events at Sens, Avignon, and Poitiers, nor of the suicides that have taken place, alas! much nearer home.

No, I shall speak only of the most honourable houses and the most holy nuns. How are they protected by ecclesiastical authority?

First, *as to the soul*, or conscience, that dearest possession, on account of which they sacrifice all the pleasures of this world; is it true that the sisters of the hospitals who passed for Jansenists have been latterly persecuted, to make them denounce their supposed secret directors; and that they have obtained a truce only through the threatening mediation of a magistrate, who is a celebrated orator and a firm Gallican?

Again, *as to the body*, or personal liberty, which the slave gains as soon as ever he does but touch the sacred soil of France — does ecclesiastical authority secure this to the nuns? Is it true that a Carmelite nun, within sixty leagues of Paris, was kept *chained* for several months in her convent, and afterwards shut up for *nine years in a madhouse*?

Is it true that a Benedictine nun was put into a sort of *in pace*, and afterwards into a room full of mad women, where nothing was heard but the horrible cries, howlings, and impure language of ruined women, who, from one excess to another, have become raving mad? \*

\* We should, perhaps, have reserved these facts for some future occasion, if they had not been already divulged by the newspapers and reviews.

This woman, whose only crime was good sense and a taste for writing and drawing flowers, served her establishment a long time as housekeeper and governess: she had taught most of the sisters to read. What does she ask for? The punishment of her enemies? No: only the consolation of confessing, and taking the sacrament; spiritual food for her old age.

People may say, "Perhaps the bishop did not know?" The bishop knew all: "he was much moved" — but he did nothing. The chaplain of the house knew they were going to put a nun *in pace*. "He sighed" — but did nothing. The *Vicaire-général* did not sigh, but sided with the party against the nun: his *ultimatum* was that she should die of hunger, or return to her dungeon.

Who showed himself the real bishop in this business? — The magistrate. Who was the real priest? The advocate, a studious young man, whom science had withdrawn from the bar, but who, seeing this unfortunate woman devoid of all succour, for whom no one durst either print or plead (under the ridiculous system of terror), took up the affair, spoke, wrote, and acted; taking every necessary step, making journeys in the depth of winter, and sacrificing both his money and his time — six months of his life. May God pay him back with interest!

Which is the good Samaritan in this case? Who proved himself the neighbour of the wretched woman? Who picked up the bleeding victim from the road, before whom the Pharisees had passed? Who is the real priest, the true father?

A witty writer of the day uses the term *my fathers*, in speaking of the magistrates who interpose in the affairs of the Church. He speaks deridingly, but they deserve the name.\*

Besides, several magistrates have expressed their opinions on many analogous facts in the same locality. A solicitor-general writes to the under-prefect:—"I have reason to be as convinced as you, that Madame \* \* \* was in full possession of her senses. A longer imprisonment would most certainly have made her really mad," &c. — A letter from the Solicitor-General Sorbier, quoted by Mr. Tilliard, in favour of Marie Lemonnier, p. 65.

\* And they have long deserved it. This subject would form a full and instructive history. It is now sufficient to state, that, in 1629, a decree, provoked by the attorney-general, forbade the monks to inflict perpetual imprisonment, the *in pace*, &c., upon their fellows. These cruelties were

Who bestows it upon them? The afflicted who are the members of Christ, and who, as such, are also the Church, I should think. Yes, they call them *fathers*, on account of their paternal equity. Their helpful interposition had too long been repelled from the threshold of the convents by these crafty words: "*What are you going to do? Should you enter here, you would disturb the peace of these quiet asylums, and startle these timid virgins!*" Why! they themselves call for our assistance: we hear their shrieks from the streets!

All of us laymen, of whatever denomination, whether magistrates, politicians, authors, or solitary thinkers, ought to take up the cause of women more seriously than we have hitherto done.

We cannot leave them where they now are, in hands so harsh and unfeeling, and which are, moreover, unsafe in more than one respect.

Nothing can be more important or more worthy of uniting us together.

Let us, I pray you, come to an understanding about it; it is the most holy of all causes: let there be then a cessation from religious strife. We can recommence our disputes afterwards as much as we please.

And first let us frankly confess the truth to one another.

continued; and towards the end of the century the good and learned Mabillon wrote (for himself alone, and the consolation of his own heart it would seem,) the little treatise of *Monastic Imprisonment*, which did not appear till after his death. I read there, that in 1350 the parliament (of Toulouse), famous for its severity, was obliged to repress the cruelty of the monks:—"The king abhorred this inhumanity, and ordered that the superiors should visit these wretched (*prisoners*) twice a month, and should give to other friars, at their choice, permission to go twice a week to see them, that is to say, that they should see them at least once a week. He sent letters patent, and in spite of the efforts made by the begging friars to get this ordinance revoked, it was enforced:—"His Majesty and his council judged it to be a barbarous thing to deprive of every consolation these poor, miserable beings, bowed down by grief and sufferings." (Registers of the Parliament of Languedoc, the year 1350.) Certainly, it is very strange that religious men, who ought to be models of gentleness and compassion, should be obliged to learn from secular princes and magistrates how to practise towards their brethren the first principles of humanity." Mabillon, *On Monastic Imprisonment*, posthumous works, vol. ii. pp. 323—326

The evil when confessed and known has a better chance of being remedied. Whom ought we to accuse in the present state of things?

Let us not accuse the Jesuits, who carry on their jesuitical trade, nor the priests, who are dangerous, restless, and violent, only because they are unhappy.

No; we ought rather to accuse ourselves.

If dead men return in broad day-light, if these Gothic phantoms haunt our streets at noon-day, it is because the living have let the spirit of life grow weak within them. How is it that these men re-appear among us, after having been buried by history with all funereal rites, and laid by the side of other ancient orders? The very sight of them is a solemn token, and a serious warning.

This has been allowed to take place, O ye men of the present day, to bring you to your senses, and to remind you of what you ought to be. If the future that is within you were revealed in its full light, who would turn his eyes towards the departing shadows of darkness and night? It is for you to find, and for you to make, the future. This is not a thing that you must expect to find ready made. If the future is already in you as a bud, transmitted from the most distant ages, let it grow there as the desire for progress and amelioration, a paternal wish for the happiness of those who are to follow you. Love in anticipation your unknown son, for he will be born. Men call him "the time to come;" and then work for him.

The day when fellow-mortals will perceive in you the man of future and a magnanimous mind, families will be rallied. Woman will follow you every where, if she can say to herself, "I am the wife of a strong man."

Modern strength appears in the powerful liberty with which you go on disengaging the reality from the forms, and the spirit from the dead letter.\* But why do you not reveal yourself to the companion of your life, in that which is for you your life itself? She passes away days and years by your side, without seeing or knowing the grandeur that is within you. If she

\* Whether it be in the highest sciences, or in minor details of business.



saw you walk free, strong, and prosperous in action and in science, she would not remain chained down to material idolatry, and bound to the sterile letter; she would rise to a faith far more free and pure, and you would be as one in faith. She would preserve for you this common treasure of religious life, where you might seek for comfort when your mind is languid; and when your various toils, studies, and business, have weakened the vital unity within you, she would bring back your thoughts and life to God, the true, the only unity.

I shall not attempt to crowd a large volume into a small preface.\* I shall only add one word, which at once expresses and completes my thought.

Man ought to nourish woman. He ought to feed spiritually (and materially if he can) her who nourishes him with her love, her milk, and her very life.

Our adversaries give women bad food; but we give them none at all.

To the women of the richer class, those who seem to be so gently protected by their family, those brilliant ones whom people suppose so happy, to these we give no spiritual food.

And to the women of the poorer class, solitary, industrious, and destitute, who try hard to gain their bread, we do not even give our assistance to help them to find their material food.

These women, who are or will be mothers, are left by us to fast (either in soul or in body), and we are punished especially by the generation that issues from them, for our neglecting to give them the staff of life.

I like to believe that good-will, generally, is not wanting —

How many things which crowded upon my mind, whilst writing this volume, have I been obliged to omit! I will mention the intimate connection of the three questions, *education*, *direction*, and *penitentiary reform*; which are three branches of the same science. Every study upon *direction* casts a light upon *education*: experiments in this are, perhaps, more instructive than those made upon children, being made upon a person no longer in a dreamy state (as children are), but awake, in a lucid state, and with the full development of the intelligence, and who, moreover, wishes seriously to obey. In spite of the clouds of mysticism, which diminish its brilliancy, the science of education will derive a great advantage from the experiments of *direction*, written with so much care by luminous minds, who could both see and analyse.

only time and attention. People live in a hurry, and can hardly be said to live: they follow with a huntsman's eagerness this or that petty object, and neglect what is important.

You man of business or study, who are so energetic and indefatigable, you have no time, say you, to associate your wife with your daily progress; you leave her to her *ennui*, idle conversations, empty sermons, and silly books; so that, falling below herself, less than woman, even less than a child, she will have neither moral action, influence, or maternal authority, over her own offspring. Well! you will have the time, as old age advances, to try in vain to do all over again what is not done twice, to follow in the steps of a son, who, from college to the schools, and from thence into the world, hardly knows his family; and who, if he travels a little, and meets you on his return, will ask you your name. The mother alone could have made you a son; but to do so you ought to have made her what a woman ought to be, strengthened her with your sentiments and ideas, and nourished her with your life.

If I look beyond the family and domestic affections, I find our negligence towards women resembles hard-heartedness; the cruel effects which result from it recoil upon ourselves.

You think yourself good and kind-hearted; you are not insensible to the fate of poor women; an old one reminds you of your mother, a young one of your daughter. But you have not the time either to see or know, that the old one and the young one are both literally dying with hunger.

Two machines are constantly working to exterminate them: — the convent, that immense workshop, that works for little or nothing, not relying on its labour for subsistence. Then the large shop, with sleeping partners, that buys of the convent\*, and destroys by degrees the smaller shops which employed the workwomen. The latter has but two chances left — the Seine, or to find at night some heartless wretch who takes advantage of her hunger.

Men receive about as much as women from public charity:

\* This is the fatal progress of things. • We can accuse no one; but from the evil itself, we hope, will come the remedy.

this is unjust. They have infinitely more resources. They are stronger, have a greater variety of work, more *initiative*, a more active impulse, more locomotion, if I may so express myself, to go and hunt out work. They travel, emigrate, and find engagements. Not to mention countries where manual labour is very dear, I know of provinces in France, where it is very difficult to find either journeymen or man-servants. Man can wander to and fro. Woman remains at home and dies.

Let this workwoman, whom the opposition of the convent has crushed, crawl to the gate of the convent — can she find an asylum there? She would want, in default of dowry, the active protection of an influential priest, a protection reserved for devout persons, such as have had the time to follow the “*Mois de Marie*,” \* the Catechisms of perseverance, &c. &c., and who have been, for a long time past, under ecclesiastical authority. This protection is often very dearly purchased; and for what? to get permission to pass one’s life shut up within walls, to be obliged to counterfeit a devotion one has not! Death cannot be worse.

They die then, quietly, decently, and alone. They will never be seen coming down from their garrets into the street to walk about with the motto, “*To live working or die fighting.*” They will make no disturbances; we have nothing to fear from them. It is for this very reason, that we are the more bound to assist them. Shall we then feel our hearts affected only for those of whom we are afraid?

Men of money, if I must speak to you in your own money language, I will tell you, that as soon as we shall have an economical government, it will not hesitate to lay out its money for women, to help them to maintain themselves by their industry. †

\* Prayers to the Virgin in the month of May.—TRANSL.

† Those who are not friendly to the poor tax in general, and who would not like the state to become a manufactory, would perhaps approve of temporary workshops open to poor females, who, otherwise, are condemned to prostitution. This very year, 1845, one of our hospitals received two young girls, half dead with hunger, who had persisted in not having recourse to this horrible resource. The asylums of which I speak might find a model in the *béguinages* of Flanders, an old establishment, but unfortunately little

Not only do these sickly women crowd our hospitals, and leave them only to return, but the offspring of these poor exhausted creatures, if they do not die in the Foundling, will be, like their mothers, the habitual inmates of those hospitals. A miserably poor woman is a whole family of sick persons in perspective.

Whether we be philosophers, physiologists, political economists, or statesmen, we all know that the excellency of the race, the strength of the people, come especially from the woman. Does not the nine months' support of the mother establish this? Strong mothers have strong children.

We all are, and ever shall be, the debtors of women. They are mothers; this says every thing. He who would bargain about the work of those who are the joy of the present and the destiny of the future, must needs have been born in misery and damnation. Their manual labour is a very secondary consideration; that is especially our part. What do they make? — Man: this is a superior work. 'To be loved, to bring forth both physically and morally, to educate man (our barbarous age does not quite understand this yet), this is the business of woman.

"*Fons omnium viventium!*" What can ever be added to this sublime saying?

Whilst writing all this, I have had in my mind a woman, whose strong and serious mind would not have failed to support me in these contentions: I lost her thirty years ago (I was a child then); nevertheless, ever living in my memory, she follows me from age to age.

She suffered with me in my poverty, and was not allowed to

known. I have spoken of them in my *History of France*. The view of the charming *béguinage* of Ghent, that beautiful village in the midst of the town, diversified with neat cottages and gardens, is one of the sweetest recollections of my travels. These *béguines* go out once a week to carry home the work. They often get well married, and sometimes are preferred to others. Might we not imitate these asylums by placing them under the superintendence of our magistrates, and keeping them free from ecclesiastical authority? I put this question to practical men of feeling, especially to that very zealous and enlightened body, the municipal council of the city of Paris. Mr. Faucher's *Studies on England* give some curious information, and new views upon different attempts of this kind.

share my better fortune. When young I made her sad, and now I cannot console her. I know not even where her bones are : I was too poor then to buy earth to bury her !

And yet I owe her much. I feel deeply that I am the son of woman. Every instant in my ideas and words (not to mention my features and gestures), I find again my mother in myself. It is my mother's blood which gives me the sympathy I feel for by-gone ages, and the tender remembrance of all those who are now no more.

What return then could I, who am myself advancing towards old age, make her for the many things I owe her ? One, for which she would have thanked me — this protest in favour of women and mothers : and I place it at the head of a book believed by some to be a work of controversy. They are wrong. The longer it lives, if it should live, the plainer will it be seen, that, in spite of polemical emotion, it was a work of history, a work of faith, of truth, and of sincerity : — on what, then, could I have set my heart more ?

Easter, 1845.

# PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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THE question is about our family: — that sacred asylum in which we all desire to seek the repose of the heart, when our endeavours have proved fruitless, and our illusions are no more. We return exhausted to the domestic hearth ; but do we find there the repose we sigh for ?

Let us not dissemble, but acknowledge to ourselves how things are : there is in our family a sad difference of sentiment, and the most serious of all.

We may speak to our mothers, wives, and daughters on any of the subjects which form the topics of our conversation with indifferent persons, such as business or the news of the day, but never on subjects that affect the heart and moral life, such as eternity, religion, the soul, and God.

Choose, for instance, the moment when we naturally feel disposed to meditate with our family in common thought, some quiet evening at the family table ; venture even there, in your own house, at your own fire-side, to say one word about these things ; your mother sadly shakes her head, your wife contradicts you, your daughter, by her very silence, shows her disapprobation. They are on one side of the table, and you on the other — and alone.

One would think that in the midst of them, and opposite you, was seated an invisible personage to contradict *whatever you may say*.

But how can we be astonished at this state of our family ? Our wives and daughters are brought up and governed by *our enemies !*

This expression gives me pain for many reasons (which I shall mention at the end of the volume); but I have not passed my life in the search of truth, to sacrifice it now to my private feelings.

Yes, *enemies of modern mind*, of liberty, and the future. It is of no use to allege that this preacher, or that sermon, is democratical. Where there is one to raise his voice for liberty, there are fifty thousand to speak against it. Whom do they expect to deceive by this clownish manœuvre?

*Our enemies*, I repeat it, in a more direct sense, as they are naturally envious of marriage and family life. This, I know full well, is rather their misfortune than their fault. An old lifeless system, of mechanical functions, can want but lifeless partisans. Nature, however, reclaims her rights: they feel painfully that family is denied them, and they console themselves *only by troubling ours*.

This system will be destroyed, by what has recently given it apparent strength, its unity, and the blind confidence which it has inspired.

But is there moral unity, or real association of souls? By no means. Every element of a dead body left to itself would naturally fall away; but, nevertheless, it is not impossible with an iron frame to bind up a dead body better than a living one; make a compact mass of it, and launch it forth.

This lifeless spirit, let us call it by its real name, Jesuitism, formerly neutralised by the different manners of living of the orders, corporations, and religious parties, is now the common spirit which the clergy imbibes through a special education, and which its chiefs make no difficulty in confessing. A bishop has said, "We are Jesuits, all Jesuits;" and nobody has contradicted him.

The greater part, however, are less frank: jesuitism acts powerfully through the medium of those who are supposed to be strangers to it; namely, the Sulpicians, who educate the clergy, the Ignorantins, who instruct the people, and the Lazarists, who direct six thousand Sisters of Charity, and have in their hands the hospitals, schools, charity-offices, &c.

So many establishments, so much money, so many pulpits for preaching aloud, so many confessionals for whispering, the education of two hundred thousand boys \*, and six hundred thousand girls, the management of several millions of women, form together a powerful machine. The unity it possesses in our days might, one would suppose, alarm the state. This is so far from being the case, that whilst the state prohibits association among the laity, it has encouraged it among the ecclesiastics. It has allowed them to form a most dangerous footing among the poorer classes, the union of workmen, apprentice-houses, association of servants, who are accountable to priests, &c. &c.

Unity of action, and the monopoly of association, are certainly two powerful levers.

Well! with all this, strange enough, the clergy is weak. This would be evident to-morrow, had it no longer the state to support it. It is manifest even as it is.

Though armed with these weapons, and assisted by an active press that they have lately taken into their service, \* working underhand in the saloons, the newspapers, and the Chambers, they have not advanced one step.

Why do you not advance? If you will leave off shouting and gesticulating for a moment, I will tell you why. You are numerous and noisy, you are strong in a thousand material means, in money, credit, intrigue, and every worldly power; you are weak only in God!

Do not cry out here. Let us have reason instead of noise: let us try, if you are men, to find out together what is religion. As spiritual men, you do not apparently make it consist entirely of material things, holy water and incense. God ought to be for you, as for us, the God of intelligence, truth, and charity.

*The God of Truth* has revealed himself in the two last centuries more than he had done in the ten preceding ones. By

\* I shall not say a word in this volume, on the strange question that has been raised, whether they who have the daughters should have the sons also, whether they should add to their monstrous monopoly, whether France would trust her children to the subjects of a foreign prince? . . . I trust to the good sense of the Chambers.



whom was this revelation accomplished? Not by you, but by those whom you call the laity, and who have been the priests of Truth. You cannot point to any one of the grand discoveries, or durable works which stand upon the road of science.

*The God of Charity*, equity, and humanity, has permitted us to substitute a humane code for the cruel law of the middle ages. But you maintain its barbarity.\* This exclusive right suppressed contradiction only by killing the contradicter. Ours admits differences; of divers tones it makes harmony; it does not wish that our enemy should die, but that he should become our friend and live. "Save the conquered" † said Henry IV., after the battle of Ivry. — "Kill all," said Pope Pius V. to the soldiers he sent into France ‡ before St. Bartholomew.

Your principle is the old exclusive homicidal one that destroys whatever contradicts it. You speak much of charity; it is not difficult to practise it, when care is taken, as with you, to exclude the enemy from it.

Why is God, who has appeared in our days in the light of sciences, the mildness of manners, and equity of the laws, still unacknowledged by you?

It is there you are weak, because there you are impious; you are wanting in one thing of all others, and that one thing is religion.

That which constitutes the gravity of this age, I may even say its holiness, is conscientious work, which promotes attentively the common work of humanity, and facilitates at its own expense the work of the future. Our forefathers dreamed much, and disputed much. But we are labourers, and this is the reason why our furrow has been blessed. The soil which the middle ages left us still covered with brambles, has produced by our efforts so plentiful a harvest, that it already envelopes and

\* Among other facts, see those quoted p. 82.

† Not only the French, but the Swiss. *Discours véritable*, 1590 (*Mém. de la Ligue*, vol. iv. p. 246).

‡ In 1569. He complained, says the panegyrist, of his general:—"Che non avesse il commendamento di lui osservato d'ammazzar subito qualunque heretico gli fosse venuto alle mani." *Catena, Vita di Pio V.*, p. 85. (ed. de Rome, et p. 55. (ed. de Mantoue).

will presently hide the old inanimate post that expected to stop the plough.

And it is because we are workmen, and return home fatigued every evening, that we need more than others the repose of the heart. Our board and fireside must again become our own; we must no longer find, instead of repose, at home, the old dispute which has been settled by science and the world, nor hear from our wife or child, on our pillow, a lesson learnt by heart, and the words of another man.

Women follow willingly the strong. How comes it, then, that in this case they have followed the weak?

It must be that there is an art which gives strength to the weak. This dark art, which consists in surprising, fascinating, lulling, and annihilating the will, has been investigated by me in this volume. The seventeenth century had the theory of it, and ours continues the practice.

Usurpation does not make right. These persons are neither stronger nor better for their furtive usurpation. The heart alone and reason give right to the strong over the weak, not indeed to weaken, but to strengthen them.

The man of the present and future age will not give up woman to the influence of the man of the past. The *direction*\* of the latter is, as I shall show, a marriage more powerful than the other; a spiritual marriage. But he who has the mind has all.

To marry a woman whose soul is in the possession of another (remember it, young man,) is to marry a divorce. Things cannot go on so. Marriage must become marriage again, and the husband must associate with his wife in the march of ideas and progress, more intimately than he has hitherto done, assisting her when weary, and helping her to advance at an equal pace. Man is not altogether innocent of what he suffers now, he must also blame himself. In this age of eager emulation

\* This word occurs often in the work, and means "spiritual guidance;" it is deemed advisable to retain it, as an equivalent does not exist in the English language. — TRANS.

and sharp research, impatient every day to advance towards the future, he has left woman behind. He has rushed forward, and she has drawn back. Let this no longer happen. Come, join hands. Do you not hear your infant cry? . . . You were about to seek the past and the future by different roads, but they are here : you will find them both in the cradle of this child !

January 10. 1845.

## DIVISION OF THE WORK.

My course of lectures of 1844 will shortly appear, entitled "Rome and France."

The subject of the present volume, mentioned in two or three of these lectures, could not be treated of in them, as the nature of the subject is too private.

It presented a serious difficulty, that of speaking with propriety of a matter in which our adversaries have given proof of an incredible liberty. "Omnia munda mundis," I know very well. However, I often preferred letting them escape, when I had them in my power, to following them in the mire.

*First Part: on Direction in the Seventeenth Century.*—I have taken my historical proofs from among the purest and best of my adversaries, not among those who are the most open to reproach. The seventeenth century could furnish me with written testimony: it is the only period that has not feared to expose in broad daylight the theory of *direction*. I could have multiplied my quotations *ad infinitum*. Those who have read the History of Louis XI. know how much I value truth in the most minute details. I have quoted but little, and have accurately and carefully verified it. The falsifiers whom, at every step in our historical studies, we catch in the fact, are marvellously bold, to speak of correctness. They may say at their ease, "They shall never make us bring forward, in opposition to theirs, names noted for their loyalty."

*Second Part: Direction in general, and especially in the Nineteenth Century.*—A serious inquiry into contemporary facts has given me the second part for a result. I have seen, listened, and questioned; I have weighed testimonies, and com-

pared them, side by side, with a great number of analogous facts, known to me for a long time past; and I have controlled, before that inward jury, my conscience, the whole of those more ancient facts, and this new inquiry.

*Third Part: on Families.* — I was far from pretending to treat this vast subject. I wanted only to point out what marriage and family are in truth, and by what means the family-hearth, disturbed by a foreign influence, may become strong again.

I shall conclude with a single word to my opponents. I have written without hatred. I will add willingly (just the contrary of the pagan's language): "O my enemies, there are no enemies." If this book, severe towards the priests, should have any influence on the future, *they* are the persons, who will most profit by it. Many among them have already pronounced this opinion, and are willing to reply to my questions. Yes, may this book, unequal as it may be to the end it aims at, help to hasten on the time when the priest, restored to his manhood, and freed from a system as absurd and impossible as it is artificial, shall obey the voice of nature, and resume his place amongst his fellow-men!

# PRIESTS, WOMEN, AND FAMILIES

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## PART I.

### 'ON DIRECTION IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY'

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## CHAPTER I.

RELIGIOUS REACTION IN 1600.—INFLUENCE OF THE JESUITS OVER WOMEN AND CHILDREN.—SAVOY; THE VAUDOIS; VIOLENCE AND MILDNESS.—ST. FRANÇOIS DE SALES.

EVERYBODY has seen in the Louvre Guido's graceful picture representing the Annunciation. The drawing is incorrect, the colouring false, and yet the effect is seducing. Do not expect to find in it the conscientiousness and austerity of the old schools\*; you would look also in vain for the vigorous and bold touch of the masters of the *Renaissance*. The sixteenth century has passed away, and every thing assumes a softer character. The figure with which the painter has evidently taken the most pleasure is the angel, who, according to the refinement of that surfeited period, is a pretty-looking singing boy—a cherub of the Sacristy. He appears to be sixteen, and the Virgin from eighteen to twenty years of age. This Virgin—by no means ideal, but real, and the reality slightly adulterated—is no other than a young Italian maiden whom Guido copied at her own house, in her snug oratory, and at her con-

\* Compare, in the Museum of the Louvre, the Annunciations of Giusto di Alamagna, Lucas de Leyde, and Vasari.

venient praying-desk (*prie-Dieu*), such as were then used by ladies.

If the painter was inspired by any thing else, it was not by the Gospel, but rather by the devout novels of that period, or the fashionable sermons uttered by the Jesuits in their coquetish-looking churches. The Angelic Salutation, the Visitation, the Annunciation, were the darling subjects upon which they had, for a long time past, exhausted every imagination of seraphic gallantry. On beholding this picture by Guido, we fancy we are reading the Bernardino; the angel speaks Latin like a young learned clerk; the Virgin, like a boarding-school young lady, responds in soft Italian, "O alto signore," &c.

This pretty picture is important as a work characteristic of an already corrupt age; being an agreeable and delicate work, we are the more easily led to perceive its suspicious graces and equivocal charms.

Let us call to mind the softened forms which the devout reaction of this age — that of Henry IV., then assumed. We are lost in astonishment, when we hear, as it were on the morrow of the sixteenth century, after wars and massacres, the lisping of this still small voice. The terrible preachers of the Sixteen, — the monks who went armed with muskets in the processions of the League, are suddenly humanised, and become gentle. The reason is, they must lull to sleep those whom they have not been able to kill. The task, however, was not very difficult. Everybody was worn out by the excessive fatigue of religious warfare, and exhausted by a struggle that afforded no result, and from which no one came off victorious; every one knew too well his party and his friends. In the evening of so long a march there was nobody, however good a walker he might be, who did not desire to rest: the indefatigable Henry of Béarn, seeking repose like the rest, or wishing to lull them into tranquillity, afforded them the example, and gave himself up with a good grace into the hands of Father Cotton and Gabrielle.

Henry IV. was the grandfather of Louis XIV., and Cotton the great uncle of Father La Chaise — two royalties, two dynasties; one of kings, the other of Jesuit confessors. The his-

tory of the latter would be very interesting. These amiable fathers rolled throughout the whole of the century, by dint of absolving, pardoning, shutting their eyes, and remaining ignorant ; they effected great results by the most trifling means, such as little capitulations, secret transactions, back-doors, and hidden staircases.

The Jesuits could plead that, being the constrained restorers of papal authority, that is to say, physicians to a dead body, the means were not left to their choice. Dead beat in the world of ideas, where could they hope to resume their warfare, save in the field of intrigue, passion, and human weaknesses ?

There, nobody could serve them more actively than women. Even when they did not act with the Jesuits and for them, they were not less useful in an indirect manner, as instruments and means,—as objects of business and daily compromise between the penitent and the confessor.

The tactics of the confessor did not differ much from those of the mistress. His address, like hers, was to refuse sometimes, to put off, to cause to languish, to be severe, but with moderation, then at length to be overcome by pure goodness of heart. These little manœuvres, infallible in their effects upon a gallant and devout king, who was moreover obliged to receive the sacrament on appointed days, often put the whole state into the confessional. The king being caught and held fast, was obliged to give satisfaction in some way or other. He paid for his human weaknesses with political ones ; such an amour cost him a state-secret, such a bastard a royal ordinance. Occasionally, they did not let him off without bail ; in order to preserve a certain mistress, for instance, he was forced to give up his son. How much did Father Cotton forgive Henry IV. to obtain from him the education of the dauphin.\*

In this great enterprise of kidnapping man every where, by using woman as a decoy, and by woman getting possession of the child, the Jesuits met with more than one obstacle, but one

\* The masterpiece of the Jesuit was to get the shepherd-poet Des Yveteaux, the most empty-headed man in France, named tutor, reserving to himself the moral and religious part of education.



particularly serious — their reputation of Jesuits. They were already by far too well known. We may read in the letters of St. Charles Borromeo, who had established them at Milan and singularly favoured them, what sort of character he gives them — intriguing, quarrelsome, and insolent under a cringing exterior. Even their penitents, who found them very convenient, were nevertheless at times disgusted with them. The most simple saw plainly enough that these people, who found every opinion probable, had none themselves. These famous champions of the faith were sceptics in morals: even less than sceptics, for speculative scepticism might leave some sentiment of honour; but a doubter in practice, who says yes on such and such an act, and yes on the contrary one, must sink lower and lower in morality, and lose not only every principle, but in time every affection of the heart!

Their very appearance was a satire against them. These people, so cunning in disguising themselves, were made up of lying; it was every where around them, palpable and visible. Like brass badly gilt, like the holy toys in their gaudy churches, they appeared false at the distance of a hundred paces: false in expression, accent, gesture, and attitude; affected, exaggerated, and often excessively fickle. This inconstancy was amusing, but it also put people on their guard. They could well learn an attitude or a deportment; but studied graces, and a bending, undulating, and serpentine gait are any thing but satisfactory. They worked hard to appear a simple, humble, insignificant, good sort of people. Their grimace betrayed them.

These equivocal-looking individuals had, however, in the eyes of the women a redeeming quality: they were passionately fond of children. No mother, grandmother, or nurse could caress them more, or could find better some endearing word to make them smile. In the churches of the Jesuits the good saints of the order, St. Xavier or St. Ignatius, are often painted as grotesque nurses, holding the divine darling (poupon\*) in their arms, fondling and kissing it. They began also to make

\* This is a term found in every page of St. François de Sales and other authors of that period.

on their altars and in their fantastically-ornamented chapels those little paradises in glass cases, where women are delighted to see the wax-child among flowers. The Jesuits loved children so much, that they would have liked to educate them all. Not one of them, however learned he might be, disdained to be a tutor, to give the principles of grammar, and teach the declensions.

There were, however, many people among their own friends and penitents, even those who trusted their souls to their keeping, who, nevertheless, hesitated to confide their sons to them.

They would have succeeded still less with women and children, if their good fortune had not given them for ally a tall lad, shrewd and discreet, who possessed precisely what they had lacked to inspire confidence,—a charming simplicity.

This friend of the Jesuits, who served them so much the better as he did not become one of them, invented, in an artless manner, for the profit of these intriguers, the manner, tone, and true style of easy devotion, which they would have ever sought for in vain. Falsehood would never assume the shadow of reality as it can do, if it was always and entirely unconnected with truth.

Before speaking of François de Sales, I must say one word about the stage on which he performs his part.

The great effort of the ultramontain reaction about the year 1600 was at the Alps, in Switzerland and Savoy. The work was going on bravely on each side of the mountains, only the means were far from being the same: they showed on either side a totally different countenance—here the face of an angel, there the look of a wild beast; the latter physiognomy was against the poor Vaudois in Piedmont.

In Savoy, and towards Geneva, they put on the angelic expression, not being able to employ any other than gentle means against populations sheltered by treaties, and who would have been protected against violence by the lances of Switzerland.

The agent of Rome in this quarter was the celebrated Jesuit, Antonio Possevino\*, a professor, scholar, and diplomatist, as

\* See his *Life*, by Dorigny, p. 505. ; Bonneville, *Life of St. François*, p. 19, &c.

well as the confessor of the kings of the North. He himself organised the persecutions against the Vaudois of Piedmont; and he formed and directed his pupil, François de Sales, to gain by his address the Protestants of Savoy.

Ought I to speak of this terrible history of the Vaudois, or pass it over in silence? Speak of it! It is far too cruel — no one will relate it without his pen hesitating, and his words being blotted by his tears.\* If, however, I did not speak of it, we should never behold the most odious part of the system, that artful policy which employed the very opposite means in precisely the same cases; here ferocity, there an unnatural mildness. One word, and I leave the sad story. The most implacable butchers were women, the penitents of the Jesuits of Turin; the victims were children! They destroyed them in the sixteenth century: there were four hundred children burnt at one time in a cavern; in the seventeenth century they kidnapped them. The edict of pacification, granted to the Vaudois in 1655, promises, as a singular favour, that their children under twelve years of age shall no longer be stolen from them; above that age it is still lawful to seize them.†

This new sort of persecution, more cruel than massacres, characterises the period when the Jesuits undertook to make themselves universally masters of the education of children. These pitiless plagiarists‡, who dragged them away from their mothers, wanted only to bring them up in their fashion, make them abjure their faith, hate their family, and arm them against their brethren.

It was, as I have said, a Jesuit professor, Possevino, who renewed the persecution about the time at which we are now arrived. The same, while teaching at Padua, had for his pupil

\* Read the history of the three great Vaudois historians, Gilles, Léger, Arnaud. Add to it the valuable map and the admirable description of the country which we find in the first volume of Mr. Muston's history. When I received this son of the martyrs at my house with so much interest, I was far from supposing that his work, full of moderation, forgetfulness, and forgiveness, would cost him the loss of his country.

† The edict states that no Vaudois shall be forced to become a Catholic: — "Ne'i figliuoli potranno esser tolti alli loro parenti, mentre che sono in età minore, cioè li maschi di dodici, e le femine di dieci anni," &c.

‡ Plagiarius, in its proper sense, means, as is well known, a man-stealer.

young François de Sales, who had already passed a year in Paris, at the college of Clermont.\* He belonged to one of those families of Savoy, as much distinguished by their devotion as by their valour, who carried on wars long against Geneva. He was endowed with all the qualities requisite for the war of seduction, which they then desired to commence : a gentle and sincere devotion, a lively and earnest speech, and a singular charm of goodness, beauty, and gentleness. Who has not remarked this charm in the smile of the children of Savoy, who are so natural, yet so circumspect ?

Every favour of Heaven must, we certainly believe, have been showered upon him, since in this bad age, bad taste, and bad party, among the cunning and false people who made him their tool, he remained, however, St. François de Sales. Every thing he has said or written, without being free from blemishes, is charming, full of affection, of an original gentleness and genius, which, though it may excite a smile, is nevertheless very affecting. — Every where we find, as it were, living fountains springing up, flowers after flowers, and rivulets meandering as in a lovely spring morning after a shower. It might be said, perhaps, that he amuses himself so much with flowerets, that his nosegay is no longer such as shepherdesses gather, but such as would suit a flower-girl, as his Philothea would say : he takes them all, and takes too many ; there are some colours among them badly matched, and have a strange effect. It is the taste of that age, we must confess ; the Savoyard taste in particular does not fear ugliness ; and a Jesuit education does not lead to the detestation of falsehood.

But even if he had not been so charming a writer, his bewitching personal qualities would still have had the same effect. His fair mild countenance, with rather a childish

\* The beautiful description of him by Saint Beuve, that everybody has read, permits me to omit a number of details. I thought, however, I ought to point out with precision the influence that the Jesuits exercised over the Saint, and the manner in which they made a tool of him. See the biographers, Bonneville, the Capuchin ; Jean de Saint François, the Bernardin ; La Rivière, the Minim ; Talon, the Jesuit ; Longuetterre, Bishop Maupas du Tour ; and especially the letters of the Saint ; I have had constantly before my eyes the edition of 1833.

expression, pleased at first sight; little children, in their nurses' arms, as soon as they saw him, could not take their eyes off him. He was equally delighted with them, and would exclaim, as he fondly caressed them, "Here is my little family." The children ran after him, and the mothers followed their children.

Little family? or little intrigue? the words (*ménage, manège*) are somewhat similar; and though a child in appearance, the good man was at bottom very deep. If he permitted the nuns a few trifling falsehoods\*, ought we to believe he never granted the same indulgence to himself? However it may be, actual falsehood appeared less in his words than in his position; he was made a bishop in order to give the example of sacrificing the rights of the bishops to the Pope. For the love of peace, and to hide the division of the Catholics by an appearance of union, he did the Jesuits the important service of saving their Molina† accused at Rome; and he managed to induce the Pope to impose silence on the friends, as well as the enemies, of Grace.

This sweet-tempered man did not, however, confine himself to the means of mildness and persuasion. In his zeal as a converter, he invoked the assistance of less honourable means — interest, money, places; lastly, authority and terror; he made the Duke of Savoy travel from village to village, and advised him at last to drive away the remaining few who still refused to abjure their faith.‡ Money, very powerful in this

\* Little lies, little deceits, little prevarications. See, for instance, *Œuvres*, vol. viii. pp. 196. 223. 342.

† Luis Molina, a celebrated Spanish theologian, born in 1535 at Cuença, was admitted into the order of the Jesuits at eighteen. He died at Madrid in 1601. Anxious to reconcile man's free will with the Divine foreknowledge and predestination, he published at Lisbon, in 1589, a work called "*De Liberi Arbitrii cum Gratiz Donis Concordiâ*." This book, approved by the censor, and dedicated to the Archduke of Austria, Inquisitor General of Spain, had great success at first; though eight years after, it was the subject of much discussion in a congregation summoned for that purpose by Pope Clement VIII. This congregation was, however, dismissed by Pope Paul V. without coming to any decision. His followers are called *Molinists*. — C. C.

‡ *Nouvelles Lettres Inédites*, published by Mr. Datta, 1835, vol. i. p. 247. See also, for the intolerance of St. François, pp. 130, 131. 136. 141., and vol. II. of the *Œuvres*, p. 335., the bounden duty\* of kings to put to the sword all the enemies of the Pope.

poor country, seemed to him a means at once so natural and irresistible, that he went even into Geneva, to buy up old Theodore de Bèze, and offered him, on the part of the Pope, a pension of four thousand crowns.

It was an odd sight to behold this man, the bishop and titular prince of Geneva, beating about the bush to circumvent his native city, and organising a war of seduction against it by France and Savoy. Money and intrigue did not suffice; it was necessary to employ a softer charm to thaw and liquify the inattackable iceberg of logic and criticism. Convents for females were founded, to attract and receive the newly converted, and to offer them a powerful bait composed of love and mysticism. These convents have been made famous by the names of Madame de Chantal and Madame Guyon. The former established in them the mild devotion of the Visitation; and it was there that the latter wrote her little book of *Torrents*, which seems inspired, like Rousseau's *Julie*, (by the bye, a far less dangerous composition,) by the Charmettes, Meillerie, and Clarence.

## CHAPTER II.

ST. FRANÇOIS DE SALES AND MADAME DE CHANTAL. — VISITATION. —  
QUIETISM. — RESULTS OF RELIGIOUS DIRECTION.

SAINT FRANÇOIS DE SALES was very popular in France, and especially in the provinces of Burgundy, where a fermentation of religious passions had continued in full force ever since the days of the League. The parliament of Dijon entreated him to come and preach there. He was received by his friend André Frémiot, who from being a counsellor in Parliament had become Archbishop of Bourges. He was the son of a president much esteemed at Dijon, and the brother of Madame de Chantal, consequently the great-uncle of Madame de Sévigné, who was the grand-daughter of the latter.\*

The biographers of St. François and Madame de Chantal, in order to give their first meeting an air of the romantic and marvellous, suppose, but with little probability on their side, that they were unacquainted; that one had scarcely heard the other spoken of; that they had seen each other only in their dreams or visions. In Lent, when the Saint preached at Dijon, he distinguished her among the crowd of ladies, and, on descending from the pulpit, exclaimed, "Who is then this young widow, who listened so attentively to the Word of God?" "My sister," replied the Archbishop, "the Baroness de Chantal."

She was then (1604) thirty-two years of age, and St. Francis thirty-seven; consequently, she was born in 1572, the year of St. Bartholomew. From her very infancy she was somewhat austere, passionate, and violent. When only six years old, a Protestant gentleman happening to give her some sugar-plums, she threw them into the fire saying, "Sir, see how the heretics

\* See the biographers of Madame de Chantal, (Fichet the Jesuit, Bishop Maupas,) and especially her letters, unfortunately incomplete, 3 vols. 12mo. 1753.

will burn in hell, for not believing what our Lord has said. If you gave the lie to the king, my papa would have you hung; what must the punishment be then for having so often contradicted our Lord!"

With all her devotion and passion, she had an eye to real advantages. She had very ably conducted the household and fortune of her husband, and those of her father and father-in-law were managed by her with the same prudence. She took up her abode with the latter, who, otherwise, had not left his wealth to her young children. *She gave them...*

We read with a sort of enchantment the lively and charming letters by which the correspondence begins between St. François de Sales, and her whom he calls "his dear sister and daughter." Nothing can be more pure and chaste, but at the same time, why should we not say so, nothing more ardent. It is curious to observe the innocent art, the caresses, the tender and ingenious flattery with which he envelops these two families, the Frémiots and the Chantals; first, the father, the good old president Frémiot, who in his library begins to make pious lectures and dreams of salvation; next, the brother, the ex-chancellor, the Archbishop of Bourges; he writes expressly for him a little treatise on the manner of preaching. He by no means neglects the father-in-law, the rough old Baron de Chantal, an ancient relic of the wars of the League, the object of the daughter-in-law's particular adoration. But he succeeds especially in captivating the young children; he shows his tenderness in a thousand ways, by a thousand pious caresses, such as the heart of a woman, and that woman a mother, had scarcely been able to suggest. He prays for them, and desires these infants to remember him in their prayers.

Only one person in this household was difficult to be tamed, and this was Madame de Chantal's confessor. It is here, in this struggle between the director and the confessor, that we learn what address, what skilful manœuvres and stratagems, are to be found in the resources of an ardent will. This confessor was a devout personage, but of confined and shallow intellect, and small means. The Saint desires to become his friend,—he submits to his superior wisdom the advice he is about to give. He



skilfully comforts Madame de Chantal, who entertained some misgiving about her spiritual infidelity, and who, finding herself moving on an agreeable sloping path, was fearful she had left the rough road to salvation. He carefully entertains this scruple in order the better to do away with it; to her inquiry whether she ought to impart it to her confessor, he adroitly gives her to understand that it may be dispensed with.

He declarés then as a conqueror, who has nothing to fear, that far from being, like the other, uneasy, jealous, and peevish, who required implicit obedience, he on the contrary imposes no obligations, but leaves her entirely free—no obligation, save that of Christian friendship, whose tie is called by St. Paul “the bond of perfectness:” all other ties are temporal, even that of obedience; but that of charity increases with time: it is free from the scythe of death, — “Love is strong as death,” saith the Song of Solomon. He says to her, on another occasion, with much ingenuousness and dignity: “I do not add one grain to the truth; I speak before God, who knows my heart and yours; every affection has a character that distinguishes it from the others; that which I feel for you has a peculiar character, that gives me infinite consolation, and to tell you all, is extremely profitable to me. I did not wish to say so much, but one word produces another, and then I know you will be careful.” (Oct. 14. 1604.)

From this moment, having her constantly before his eyes, he associates her not only with his religious thoughts, but, what astonishes us more, with his very acts as a priest. It is generally before or after mass that he writes to her; it is of her, of her children, that he is thinking, says he, “*at the moment of the communion.*” They do penance the same days, take the communion at the same moment, though separate; “*he offers her to God, when he offers Him His Son!*” \*

This singular man, whose serenity was never for a moment affected by such a union, was able very soon to perceive that

\* “I give you, and your widowed heart, and your children, every day to our Lord, in offering Him His Son.”—(Nov. 1. 1605.) “The Lord knows whether I have taken the sacrament without you, since my departure from your city.” (Nov. 21. 1604.)—Œuvres, vol. viii., pp. 311. 272, &c.

the mind of Madame de Chantal was far from being as tranquil as his own. Her character was strong, and she felt deeply. The middle class of people, the citizens and lawyers, from whom she was descended, were endowed from their birth with a keener mind, and a greater spirit of sincerity and truth, than the elegant, noble, but enfeebled families of the sixteenth century. The last comers were fresh; you find them every where ardent and serious in literature, warfare, and religion; they impart to the seventeenth century the gravity and holiness of its character. Thus this woman, though a saint, had nevertheless depths of unknown passion.

They had hardly been separated two months when she wrote to him that she wanted to see him again. And indeed they met half way in Franche-Comte, in the celebrated pilgrimage of St. Claude. There she was happy; there she poured out all her heart, and confessed to him for the first time; making him the sweet engagement of entrusting to his beloved hands the vow of obedience.

Six weeks had not passed away before, she wrote to him that she wanted to see him again. Now she is bewildered by passions and temptations; all around her is darkness and doubts; she doubts even of her faith; she has no longer the strength of exercising her will; she would wish to fly — alas! she has no wings; and in the midst of these great but sad feelings, this serious person seems rather childish; she would like him to call her no longer “madam,” but his sister, his daughter, as he did before.

She uses in another place this sad expression, — “There is something within me that has never been satisfied.” — (Nov. 21. 1604.)

The conduct of St. François deserves our attention. This man, so shrewd at other times, will now understand but half. Far from inducing Madame de Chantal to adopt a religious life, which would have put her into his power, he tries to strengthen her in her duties of mother and daughter towards her children and the two old men who required also her maternal care. He discourses with her of her duties, business, and obligations. As to her doubts, she must neither reflect nor reason about them. She must occasionally read good books; and he points out to

her, as such, some paltry mystic treatises. If the *she-ass* should kick (it is thus he designates the flesh and sensuality), he must quiet her by some blows of discipline.

He appears at this time to have been very sensible that an intimacy between two persons so united by affection was not without inconvenience. He answers with prudence to the entreaties of Madame de Chantal: "I am bound here hand and foot; and as for you, my dear sister, does not the inconvenience of the last journey alarm you?"

This was written in October on the eve of a season rude enough among the Alps and at Jura: "We shall see between this and Easter."

She went at this period to see him at the house of his mother; then, finding herself all alone at Dijon, she fell very ill. Occupied with the controversy of this time, he seemed to be neglecting her. He wrote to her less and less; feeling, doubtless, the necessity of making all haste in this rapid journey. All this year (1605) was passed, on her part, in a violent struggle between temptations and doubts; at last she scarcely knew how to make up her mind, whether to bury herself with the Carmelites, or marry again.

A great religious movement was then taking place in France: this movement, far from being spontaneous, was well devised, very artificial, but, nevertheless, immense in its results. The rich and powerful families of the Bar had, by their zeal and vanity, impelled it forward. At the side of the oratory founded by Cardinal de Bérulle, Madame Acarie, a woman singularly active and zealous, a saint engaged in all the devout intrigues (known also as the blessed Mary of the incarnation), established the Carmelites in France, and the Ursulines in Paris. The impassioned austerity of Madame de Chantal urged her towards the Carmelites; she consulted occasionally one of their superiors, a doctor of the Sorbonne.\* St. François de Sales perceived the danger, and he no longer endeavoured to contend against her. He accepted Madame de Chantal from that very moment. In a

\* See St. François, Œuvres, viii.<sup>o</sup> 336., April, 1606; and Tabarand. Life of Bérulle, pp. 1. 57, 58, 95, 141.

charming letter he gives her, in the name of his mother, his young sister to educate.

It seems that as long as she had this tender pledge she was in some degree calmer; but it was soon taken from her. This child, so cherished and so well taken care of, died in her arms at her own house. She cannot disguise from the Saint, in the excess of her grief, that she had asked God to let her rather die herself; she went so far as to pray that she might rather lose one of her own children!

This took place in November (1607). It is three months after that we find in the letters of the Saint the first idea of getting nearer to him a person so well tried, and who seemed to him, moreover, to be an instrument of the designs of God.

The extreme vivacity, I was almost saying the violence, with which Madame de Chantal broke every tie in order to follow an impulse given with so much reserve, proves too plainly all the passion of her ardent nature. It was not an easy thing to leave there those two old men, her father, her father-in-law, and her own son, who, they say, stretched himself out on the threshold to prevent her passing. Good old Frémiot was gained over less by his daughter than by the letters of the Saint, which she used as auxiliaries. We have still the letter of resignation, all blotted over with his tears, in which he gives his consent: this resignation, moreover, seems not to have lasted long. He died the following year.

She has now passed over the body of her son and that of her father; she arrives at Annecy. What would have happened if the Saint had not found fuel for this powerful flame that he had raised too high — higher than he desired himself?

The day after the Pentecost, he calls her to him after mass: "Well, my daughter," says he, "I have determined what I shall do with you." "And I am resolved to obey," cried she, falling on her knees before him. "You must enter St. Clair's." "I am quite ready," replied she. "No, you are not strong enough; you must be a sister in the Hospital of Beaune." "Whatever you please." "This is not quite what I want — become a Carmelite." He tried her thus in several ways, and found her ever

obedient. "Well," said he, "nothing of the sort — God calls you to the Visitation."

The Visitation had nothing of the austerity of the ancient orders: the founder himself said it was "almost no religion at all." No troublesome customs, no watchings, no fastings, but little duty, short prayers, no seclusions (in the beginning); the sisters, while they waited for the coming of the divine Bridegroom, went to visit him in the person of his poor and his sick, who are his living members. Nothing was better calculated to calm the stormy passions within, than this variety of active charity. Madame de Chantal, who had formerly been a good mother, a prudent housekeeper, was happy in finding even in mystic life employment for her economical and positive faculties in devoting herself to the laborious detail of the establishment of a great order, in travelling, according to the orders of her beloved director, from one establishment to another. It was a twofold proof of wisdom in the Saint: he made her useful, and kept her away.

With all this prudence, we must say that the happiness of working together for the same end, of founding, and creating together, strengthened still more the tie that was already so strong. It is curious to see how they tighten the band in wishing to untie it. This contradiction is affecting: at the very time he is prescribing to her to detach herself from him who had been her nurse, he protests that this nurse shall never fail her. The very day he lost his mother he writes in these strong terms: "To you I speak, to you, I say, to whom I have allotted my mother's place in my memorial of the mass, without depriving you of the one you had, for I have not been able to do it, so fast do you retain what you have in my heart; and so it is, *you possess it first and last.*"

I do not think a stronger expression ever escaped the heart on a more solemn day. How burning must it have entered her heart, already lacerated with passion! How can he be surprised after that, that she should write to him, "Pray to God, that I survive you not!" Does he not see, that at every instant he wounds, and heals only to renew the pain?

The nuns of the Visitation, who published some of the letters

of their foundress\*, have ~~prudently~~ suppressed several, which, as they say themselves, "are only fit to be kept under the lock and key of charity." Those which are extant are, however, quite sufficient to show the deep wound she bore with her to the grave.†

The Visitation being supported neither by active charity, which was soon prohibited, nor by the cultivation of the intellect, which had given life to the Paraclet and other convents of the middle ages, had no other choice, it would seem, than to adopt mystic asceticism. But the moderation of the founder, in conformity with the lukewarmness of the times, had excluded from his new institution the austerity of the ancient orders—those cruel practices that annihilated the senses in destroying the body itself; consequently, there was no activity, nor study, nor austerity. In this vacuum two things were evident from the very outset: on one side, narrow-mindedness, a taste for trivial observances, and a fantastical system of devotion (Madame de Chantal tattooed her bosom with the name of Jesus); on the other side, an unreasonable and boundless attachment to the director.

In every thing relating to St. François de Sales the saint shows herself very weak. After his death she raves, and allows herself to be guided by dreams and visions. She fancies that she perceives his dear presence, in the churches, amid celestial perfumes perceptible to her alone. She lays upon his tomb a little book composed of all he had written or said upon the

\* I never read in any language any thing more impassioned or better contested, more ingenuous and yet more subtle, than a letter of Madame de Chantal "On Desire, and the Suffering of Deprivation." We feel painfully that it is her soul struggling to be severed from its dearest affection. This letter is no doubt indebted to its obscurity for not having been proscribed by the Visitandine nuns. Letters of Madame de Chantal, vol. i. pp. 27—30. See another letter of the same, in the *Œuvres de St. Francis*, vol. x. p. 139. August, 1619.

† Twenty years after the death of St. François, the very year she died, revered already as a saint, she wrote letters to the austere abbot of St. Cyran, then a prisoner at Vincennes, for the express purpose of still discouraging with him of the ever-cherished remembrance. See the Christian and spiritual letters of Jean du Vergier de Hauranne, abbot of St. Cyran, 1645, 4to., vol. i. pp. 53—86. Even he, the most austere of men, seems for a moment to feel and to be affected.

Visitation, praying "that if there was any thing in it contrary to his intentions, he would have the goodness to efface it."

In 1631, ten years after the death of St. François de Sales, his tomb was solemnly opened, and his body was found entire. "It was placed in the sacristy of the monastery, where, about nine o'clock at night, after the crowd had withdrawn, she led her community, and began praying by the side of the body, 'in an ecstasy of love and humility.' As they were forbidden to touch it, she did a signal act of obedience in abstaining from kissing his hand. The following morning, having obtained permission, she stooped down in order to place the saint's hand upon her head; when, as if he had been alive, he drew her towards him, and held her in a paternal and tender caress: she felt very plainly this supernatural movement. . . . They still keep, as a double relic, the veil she then wore."

Let others be at a loss to find out the real name of this worthy sentiment, or let a false reserve prevent them; let them term it filial piety, or fraternal affection; we, for our part, shall call it simply by a name that we believe holy—we shall call it love.

We are bound to believe the saint himself, when he assures us that this sentiment contributed powerfully to his spiritual progress. However, this is not sufficient; we must see what effect it had upon Madame de Chantal.

All the doctrine to be found in the writings of St. François, among much excellent practical advice, might be summed up in these words—to *love*, and to *wait*.

*To wait* for the visitation of the divine bridegroom. Far from advising action, or the desire of acting, he is so afraid of motion, that he proscribes the word *union* with God, which might imply a tendency to unite; and desires that the word *unity* may be used instead, for it is necessary to remain in a loving indifference. "I wish for very little," said he, "and that little I desire very little; I have almost no desires; but if I were to be born again, I would have none at all. If God came to me, I would go to him also; but *if he would not come to me, I would remain there, and not go to him.*"

This absence of every desire excluded even that of virtue. It is the highest point which the saint seems to have reached a short time before his death. He writes on the 10th of August,

1619, "Say you renounce every virtue, desiring them only as you receive them gradually from God, nor wishing to take any care for acquiring them, excepting in proportion as His bounty shall employ you to do so, for His own good pleasure." If self-will disappear at this point, what will take its place? The will of God apparently. . . . Only, let us not forget that if this miracle take place, it will have for its result a state of unalterable peace, and immutable strength. By this token, and by no other, are we bound to recognise it.

Madame de Chantal herself tells us that it had just the contrary effect. Though they have skilfully arranged her life, and mutilated her letters, there are still enough of them to show in what a tempest of passion she passed her days. Her whole life, which was long, and taken up with real cares, in founding and managing religious establishments, contributes in no way to calm her; time wears her out and destroys her, without effecting any change in her inward martyrdom. She finishes by this confession in her latter days: "All that I have suffered during the whole course of my life are not to be compared to the torments I now feel; I am reduced to such a degree that nothing can satisfy me, nor give me any relief, except one word—Death!"

I did not need this sad testimony; I could have found it out without her assistance. This exclusive cultivation of sensibility, whatever be the virtues that ennoble it, ends infallibly in tormenting the soul, and reducing it to a state of excruciating suffering. We cannot, with impunity, allow our will, the very essence of our strength and reason, the guardian of our tranquillity, to be absorbed by an all-devouring love.

I have spoken elsewhere\* of the few but splendid examples exhibited throughout the middle ages in the persons of learned nuns, who combined science with piety. Their instructors seem to have entertained no apprehension in developing both their reason and their will. But science, it is said, fills the soul with uneasiness and curiosity, and removes us from God. As if there were any science without Him; as if the divine efful-

\* In a fragment on "The Education of Women in the Middle Ages," reprinted at the end of my "Introduction to Universal History," 3rd edition, 1844.



gence, reflected in science, had not a serene virtue, a power diffusing tranquillity in the human heart, and imparting that peace of eternal truths and imperishable laws, which will exist in all their purity when worlds will be no more.

Whom do I blame in all this? Man? God forbid! I only censure the method.

This method, which was termed Quietism when once it was reduced to a system, and which, as we shall see presently, is, generally speaking, that of the *devout direction*\*, is nothing else than the development of our passiveness, our instinct of indolence; the result of which, in course of time, is the paralysis of our will, the annihilation of the essence of man's constitution.

St. François de Sales was, it would seem, one of the most likely persons to impart animation to this lifeless system. Nevertheless it was he, the loyal and the pure, who introduced the system at this period; it was he who in the seventeenth century pointed out the road to *passiveness*.

We are, as yet, in the earliest dawn of the century, in all its morning freshness, and invigorated by the breeze from the Alps. Yet see, Madame de Chantal sickens and breathes with difficulty. . . . How will it be towards evening?

The worthy saint, in a delightful letter, describes himself as being one day on the lake of Geneva, "on a small raft," guided by Providence, and perfectly obedient "to the pilot, who forbids him to stir, and very glad at having only a board three fingers thick to support him." The century is embarked with him, and, with this amiable guide, he sails among breakers. These deep waters, as you will find out afterwards, are the depths of Quietism; and if your sight is keen enough, you may already perceive Molinos through this transparent abyss.†

\* So inherent is it in the *devout direction*, that you meet with it even among the adversaries of Quietism. See Bossuet's Letters to the nuns whom he directed.

† The principle is the same with St. François de Sales, and all the Quietists of whatsoever degree: the *annihilation of the will* is held up as the *ideal of perfection*. St. François does not recommend annihilation for the *habitual* state of the soul; but the others wish that this state, which is that of perfection, should become *habitual*, if it can (says Fénelon), or even *perpetual* (says Molinos). Bossuet hunts for, and finds in St. François, some few passages contrary to his general doctrine: they prove only that the saint is not consistent.

## CHAPTER III.

LONELINESS OF WOMAN. — EASY DEVOTION. — WORLDLY THEOLOGY OF THE JESUITS AND ROME. — WOMEN AND CHILDREN ADVANTAGEOUSLY MADE USE OF. — WAR OF THIRTY YEARS, 1618—1648. — GALLANT DEVOTION. — DEVOUT NOVELS. — CASUISTS.

HITHERTO we have spoken of a rare exception—the life of a woman full of action, and doubly employed; as a saint and foundress, but especially as a wife, the mother of a family, and prudent housewife. The biographers of Madame de Chantal remark, as a singular thing, that in both conditions, as wife and as widow, she conducted her own household herself, directed her dependents, and administered the property of her husband, her father, and her children.

This indeed was becoming rare. The taste for household and domestic cares which we find every where in the sixteenth century, but especially among citizens and the families of the bar, grows much weaker in the seventeenth, when every one desires to live in great style.

The absence of occupation is a taste of the period, proceeding also from the state of things. All society is ever idle on the morrow of religious wars, each local action has ceased, and central life, that is to say, court life, has hardly begun. The nobility have finished their adventures, and hung up their swords; the citizens have nothing further to do, being no longer engaged in plots, seditions, or armed processions. The *ennui* of this want of occupation falls particularly heavy upon woman; she is about to become at once unoccupied and lonely. In the sixteenth century she was kept in communication with man by the vital questions that were debated, even in her family, by common dangers, fears, and hopes. But there was nothing of the sort in the seventeenth century.

Add to this a more serious circumstance which is likely to increase in the following ages; namely, that in every profession

the spirit of specialty and detail, which gradually absorbs man, has the effect of insulating him in his family, and of making him, as it were, a mute being for his wife and kindred. He no longer communicates to them his daily thoughts; and they can understand nothing of the minute intricacies and petty technical problems, which occupy his mind.

But, at least, woman has still her children to console her? No; at the time we are now speaking of, the mansion, silent and empty, is no longer kept alive by the noise of children; instruction at home is now an exception, and gives way daily to the fashion of collective education. The son is brought up among the Jesuits, the daughter by the Ursulines, or other nuns; the mother is left alone.

The mother and the son are henceforth separated! An immense evil, the bud of a thousand misfortunes for families and society! I shall return to this subject later.

Not only separated, but, by the effect of a totally opposite life, they will be more and more opposed in mind, and less and less able to understand each other. The son a little pedant in *us*\*, the mother ignorant and worldly, have no longer a common language between them.

A family thus disunited will be much more open to influence from without. The mother and the child, once separated, are more easily caught; though different means are employed. The child is tamed, and broken in by an overwhelming mass of studies; he must write and write, copy and copy again, at best translate and imitate. But the mother is entrapped by means of her excessive loneliness and *ennui*. The lady of the mansion is alone in her residence; her husband is hunting, or at the court. The president's lady is alone in her hotel; the gentleman starts every morning for the palace, and returns in the evening: a sad abode is this hotel in the Marais or City, some overgrown grey house in a dismal little street.

The lady in the sixteenth century beguiled her leisure hours by singing, and often by poetry. In the seventeenth they forbade her all worldly songs; as to religious songs, she abstains

\* Meaning the Latin declension. — TRANSL.

from them much more easily Sing a psalm! It would be to declare herself a Protestant! What then remains for her? Gallant devotion—the conversation of the director or the lover.

The sixteenth century, with its strong morality and fluctuation of ideas, took, as it were, by fits and starts, flying leaps from gallantry to devotion, then from God to the devil: it made sudden and alternate changes from pleasure to penitence. But in the seventeenth century people were more ingenious: thanks to the progress of equivocation, they are enabled to do both at once, and, by mingling the language of love with that of devotion, speak of both at the same time. If, without being seen, you could listen to the conversation in a coquettish neighbourhood, you would not always be able to say whether it is the lover or the director who is speaking.

To explain to one's self the singular success of the latter, we must not forget the moral situation of the time, the uneasy and bewildered state of every one's conscience on the morrow of a period of religious wars, harassed by passions. In the dull tranquillity that succeeded, in the nullity of the present, the past would rise up in glowing colours, and the remembrance of it become the more importunate. Then was awakened in many minds, especially among weak and impassioned women, the terrible question of eternal bliss or woe.

The whole fortune of the Jesuits, and the confidence placed in them by the nobles and fine ladies, arose from the clever answer they gave to this question. It is therefore indispensable to say a few words about it.

Who can save us? The theologian, on the one hand, and the jurist or philosopher, on the other, give diametrically opposite answers.

The theologian, if he be really such, attributes the greatest share to Christianity, and answers, "It is the grace of Christ, which serves us as a substitute for justice\*, and saves whom-

\* This is, though at different degrees, the common answer of the defenders of grace, whether they be Protestants, Jansenists, Thomists, &c. Put on the opposite side all the shades of opinion of the opposite party, the juriconsults of antiquity and the middle ages, the Pelagian and Semi-pelagian heretics, and modern philosophers.

soever it will. A few are predestined to be saved, the greater number to be damned."

The jurist answers, on the contrary, that we are punished or rewarded according to the good or bad use that we freely make of our will; that we are paid according to our works, according to justice. This is the eternal debate between the jurist and the theologian, between justice and predestination.

In order to have a clearer idea of the opposition of these two principles, let us imagine a mountain with two declivities, its summit terminating in a very narrow ridge, with the edge as sharp as a razor. On one side is predestination that damns, on the other justice that strikes—two terrible monsters. Man is on the top, with one foot on one slope and one on the other, ever on the point of slipping.

And when was the fear of sliding stronger than after those great crimes of the sixteenth century, when Man was top-heavy, and lost his balance? We know the religious horror of Charles IX. after the massacre of Saint Bartholomew: he died for want of a Jesuit confessor. John III., King of Sweden, who killed his brother, did not die of remorse: his wife took care to send for the good Father Possevino, who purified him and made him a Catholic.

The means employed by the Jesuits to calm consciences fill us, at first sight, with surprise.\* They adopted both skilfully and carefully; still they did adopt the principle of the jurists, namely, that man is saved or lost by his works, by the use he makes of his free will.

A liberal doctrine, yet severe, it would seem: you are free, consequently responsible, and punishable. You sin, and you expiate.

The jurisconsult, who is in earnest, requires here a serious expiation—the personal chastisement of the guilty party. "He must forfeit his head," says he: "the law will cure him of his malady of iniquity by the sword."

We should fare better by going to the Jesuit, and get off

\* It is the eclectic attempt of Molina: *Concordia*, &c.

much cheaper.\* The expiation he requires is not so terrible. He will often prove that there is no necessity for any expiation. The fault, properly interpreted, will turn out, perhaps, to be a merit. At the worst, if found to be a fault, it may be washed out by good works; now, the very best work of all is to devote one's self to the Jesuits, and espouse the ultramontane interest.

Do you perceive all the skill of the Jesuits in this manœuvre of theirs? On the one hand, the doctrine of liberty and justice, with which the middle ages had reproached the jurisconsults as pagan and irreconcilable with Christianity, is now adopted by the Jesuits, who show themselves to the world as the friends and champions of free will. On the other hand, as this free will brings on the sinner responsibility and justice according to his works, he finds himself very much embarrassed with it. The Jesuit comes very seasonably to his relief; he takes upon himself the task of directing this inconvenient liberty, and reduces works to the capital one of serving Rome. So that moral liberty, professed in theory, will turn practically to the profit of authority.

A double lie. These people who give themselves the title of Jesuits, or men of Jesus, teach that man is saved less by Jesus than by himself, by his free will. Are, then, these men philosophers, and friends of liberty? Quite the contrary: they are at once the most cruel enemies of philosophy and liberty.

That is to say, with the word free will they juggle away Jesus; and only retain the word Jesus to cheat us of the liberty which they set before us.

The thing being thus simplified on both sides, a sort of tacit bargain was made between Rome, the Jesuits, and the world.

Rome gave up *Christianity*, the principle which forms its basis (salvation by Christ). Having been called upon to choose between this doctrine and the contrary one, she durst not decide.†

\* Analogous in speculative doctrine, they differ in practice. The jurist maintains the penal code, and the Jesuit suppresses penitence. There is the real bait, *the little fish employed to catch the big ones*, according to the expressive emblem, *Imago primi Sæculi Societatis Jesu*.

† The Jesuits succeeded in getting silence imposed on both parties; that is to say, that Rome should prevent both Molina and St. Thomas from preaching any longer.

The Jesuits gave up *morality* after religion; reducing the moral merits by which man may earn his salvation, to only one, the political merit of which we have spoken, that of serving Rome.

What must the world give up in its turn ?

The world (by far the most worldly part of the world, woman) will have to give up her best possessions, her family and her domestic hearth. Eve once more betrays Adam; woman deceives man in her husband and son.

Thus every one sold his God. Rome bartered away religion, and woman domestic piety.

The weak minds of women after the great corruption of the sixteenth century, spoiled beyond all remedy, full of passion, fear, and wicked desires mingled with remorse, seized greedily the means of sinning conscientiously, of expiating without either amendment, amelioration, or return towards God. They thought themselves happy to receive at the confessional, by way of penance, some little political commission, or the management of some intrigue. They transferred to this singular manner of expiating their faults the very violence of the guilty passions, for which the atonement was to be made; and in order to remain sinful, they were often obliged to commit crimes.\*

The passion of woman, inconstant in every thing else, was in this case sustained by the vigorous obstinacy of the mysterious and invisible hand that urged her forward. Under this impulse, at once gentle and strong, ardent and persevering, firm as iron and as dissolving as fire, characters and even interests at length gave way.

Some examples will help us to understand it the better. In France, old Lesdiguières was, politically, much interested in remaining a Protestant: as such, he was the head man of the party. The king rather than the governor of Dauphiné, he assisted the Swiss, and protected the populations of Vaud and Romand against the house of Savoy. But the old man's daughter was gained over by Father Cotton. She set to work upon

\* See, in Léger, the vast system of espionage, intrigue, and secret persecution, that the first ladies of Piedmont and France had organised, under the direction of the Jesuits.

her father with patience and address, and succeeded in inducing him to quit his high position for an empty title, and change his religion for the title of Constable.

In Germany the character of Ferdinand I., his interest, and the part he had to play, would have induced him to remain moderate, and not become the vassal of his nephew, Philip II. With violence and fanaticism he had no choice but to accept a secondary place. The emperor's daughters, however, intrigued so well that the house of Austria became united by marriage to the houses of Lorraine and Bavaria. The children of these families being educated by the Jesuits\*, the latter repaired in Germany the broken thread of the destinies of the Guises, and had even better fortune than the Guises themselves; for they made for their own use certain blind instruments, agents in diplomacy and tactics — skilful workmen, certainly, but still mere workmen. I speak of that hardy and devout generation, of Ferdinand II. of Austria, of Tilly, and Maximilian of Bavaria, those conscientious executors of the great works of Rome, who, under the direction of their teachers, carried on for so long a time, throughout Europe, a warfare which was at once barbarous and skilful, merciless and methodical. The Jesuits launched them into it, and then carefully watched over them; and whenever Tilly on his charger was seen dashing over the smoking ruins of cities, or the battle-field covered with the slain, the Jesuit, trotting on his mule, was not far off.

This vile war, the most loathsome in history, appears the more horrible, by the almost total absence of free inspiration and spontaneous impulse. It was, from its very beginning, both artificial and mechanical † — like a war of machines or phantoms. These strange beings, created only to fight, march with a look as void of martial ardour, as their heart is of affection. How could they be reasoned with? What language could be used towards them? What pity could be expected from them? In our wars of religion, in those of the Revolution,

\* See Ranke on Popery; Dorigny, *Life of Father Canisius*; and especially P. P. Wolf, *Geschichte Maximilians*, i. 58. 95.

† Excepting, as a matter of course, the electrical moment of Gustavus-Adolphus.



they were men who fought ; each died for the sake of his idea, and, when he fell on the battle-field, he shrouded himself in his faith. Whereas the partisans of the thirty years' war have no individual life — no idea of their own ; their very breath is but the inspiration of the evil genius who urges them on. These automatons, who grow blinder every day, are not the less obstinate and bloody. No history would lead us to understand this abominable phenomenon, if there did not remain some delineation of them in the hellish pictures of that diabolical, *damned* Salvator Rosa.\*

Behold, then, this fruit of mildness, benignity, and paternity ; see how, after having by indulgence and connivance exterminated morality, seized on the family by surprise, fascinated the mother and conquered the child, and by the devil's own art raised the *man-machine*, they are found to have created a monster, whose whole idea, life, and action was *murder*, nothing more.

Wise politicians, amiable men, good fathers, who with so much mildness have skilfully arranged from afar the thirty years' war†, seducing Aquaviva, the learned Canisius, and the good Possevino, the friend of St. François de Sales, who will not admire the flexibility of your genius? At the very time you were organising the terrible intrigue of this second and prolonged St. Bartholomew, you were mildly discussing with the good saint the difference that ought to be observed between "those who died in love, and those who died for love."

What by-path led from these mild theories to such atrocious results? How did it happen‡ that souls enervated by gallant devotion and devout gallantry, and spoiled by the daily facilities of an obliging and accommodating casuistry, allowed themselves to be taken asleep in the meshes of political intrigue?‡ It

\* The term is a harsh one, and I am sorry for it. If this great artist paints war so cruelly, it is doubtless because he had more feeling than any of his contemporaries, and appreciates more keenly the horror of this terrible epoch.

† See, especially in Ranke, how Aquaviva captivated the mind of young Maximilian of Bavaria, who was to perform so important a part in the thirty years' war.

‡ Is the astonishing ease with which this great enterprise was begun to

would be a long story. In order to set about it one must wade through their nauseous literature ; but one sickens at the sight of their filthy trash.

One word, however, for it is important. Prepared as the world was, both by bad morals and bad taste, for the miserable productions with which the Jesuits inundated it, all this insipid flood would have subsided without leaving any traces behind, had they not mingled with it a part of the pure original stream, which had already delighted the human heart. The charm of St. François de Sales, his sublime spiritual union with Madame de Chantal, the holy and mild seducing influence which he had exercised over women and children, served indirectly, but very efficaciously, the purpose of this great religious intrigue.

With small morality and cheap absolution, the Jesuits could very easily corrupt consciences, but not tranquillise them. They could play, with more or less skill, upon that rich instrument Falsehood, which their institution gave them, airs of science, art, literature, and theology ; but could they, with all this false fingering, produce one true note ? — Not one !

But this true and gentle note was precisely that which was sounded for them by St. François. They had only to play after his method to make the false appear a little less discordant. The amiable qualities of his writings, nay, their pleasing errors, were skilfully made the most of. His taste for the minute and humble, which made him bestow a partial regard upon the lesser beings of the creation, such as little children, lambs, birds, and bees, became a precedent among the Jesuits for whatever is finical and narrow-minded, for a meanness of style and littleness of heart. The bold but innocent language of an angel, pure as light itself, who incessantly points out God in his sweetest revelation, woman suckling, and the divine mysteries of love,

be accounted for by supposing that the leaders were men of a superior genius ? I do not think so. Does a spirit of intrigue, a certain patient and cunning political address, constitute genius ? The celebrated Jesuits of the time, those who were the most successful in business (if we judge them by what they have left behind them), were insipid scribblers, clumsy pedants, or grotesque wits. Mr. Ranke, with his benevolent impartiality, in enumerating the heroes of both parties in this warfare of the human mind, hunts for a great name to match with that of Shakspeare : and he finds Baldus.

emboldened his imitators to make the most perilous equivocations, and was the occasion of their carrying their ambiguous terms to such a pitch, that the line of demarcation between gallantry and devotion, the lover and the spiritual father, became at length invisible.

The friend of St. François de Sales, good bishop Camus, with all his little romances, contributed much to this. There was nothing now but pious sheep-folds, devout Astreas, and ecclesiastical Amyntases.\* Conversion sanctifies every thing in these novels; I am aware of it. The lovers at the end of the story enter a convent or seminary, but they arrive there by a long roundabout road, which enables them to dream by the way.

A taste for the romantic† and insipid, the benignant and paternal style, thus gained ground rapidly. The event showed that the innocent had worked for the benefit of the cunning. A St. François and a Camus prepared the way for Father Douillet.

The essential point for the Jesuits was to reduce and to lessen, to make minds weak and false, to make the little very little, and turn the simple into idiots: a mind nourished with trifles, and amused with toys, must be easy to govern. Emblems, rebuses, and puns, the delight of the Jesuits, were very fit for that purpose. Among the class of silly emblems, few books can vie with the *Imago primi Sæculi Societatis Jesu*.

All this paltry nonsense succeeded admirably with women who had no sort of occupation, and whose minds had been for a long time corrupted by an unintellectual gallantry. It has been proved by experience, in every age, that to please the sex only two things are requisite; first, to amuse them, to participate in their taste for every thing that is trifling, romantic, and false;

\* Camus, in his *Alexis*, excuses his writing romances, on the ground that they are to take the place of worldly novels:—"As the nurse takes medicine to purge the child." The copy in the Arsenal Library is curious for its MS. notes.

† In the taste for the romantic, those published in our own time have not degenerated. The late editor of St. François wishes he had "the pen that traced the death of Attila, and the chaste Amours of Cymodocée," to write his history of the Saint and Madame de Chantal (vol. i. p. 243.);—edition dedicated to the Archbishop of Paris. The very perfection of silliness in this style is the *Life of the Virgin*, by the Abbé Orsini.

secondly, to flatter them, and spoil them in their weaknesses, by making one's self weaker, more effeminate, and womanish than they.

This was the line of conduct laid down for all. — How is it that the lover gets an advantage over the husband? Generally speaking, it is less by his passion, than by his assiduity and complaisance, and by flattering woman's fancy. The director will make use of the very same means; he will flatter, and so much the more successfully, as some degree of austerity at least was expected from his character and profession. But what is to prevent another from flattering still more? We have just now seen an instance (a respectable one, it is true) of these spiritual infidelities.

In changing continually one confessor for another, merely on account of his being more gentle and indulgent than the former, we run the risk of falling very low in morality. To get the upper hand over so many accommodating directors, an entirely new standard of effeminacy and baseness is required. The new comer must entirely change the characters; and instead of being the judge, as formerly, at the bar of penitence, he must be a suppliant; justice will be obliged to plead before the sinner, and the divine man becomes the penitent!

The Jesuits, who by these means supplanted so many directors, bear witness, that in this sort of opposition they had no one to fear.\* They knew well enough, that no other would be found better qualified than a Jesuit for easy indulgence, disguised connivance, and subtilty to overreach the Deity. Father Cotton was so little afraid of his penitents leaving him, that, on the contrary, he used occasionally to advise them to go to the other confessors: "Go," said he, "go and try them; you will return to me!"

Only imagine this general emulation among confessors, directors, and consulting casuists, to justify every thing, to find every day some adroit means of carrying indulgence still further,

\* See, on this subject, the singular fatuity of the Jesuit Fichet, and the contempt with which he speaks of the former director of Madame de Chantal, who was too jealous of her: he goes so far as to call him "ce pasteur . . ."—Pp. 123—135.

of declaring innocent some new case, that had hitherto been supposed guilty. The result of this manner of waging war against sin, emulously carried by so many learned men, was its gradual and universal disappearance from the common life of man; sin could no longer find a haven of refuge, and one might reasonably suppose, that in a few years it would cease to exist in the world.

The great book of "Provinciales," with all the artifice of method, omits one thing, which we regret. In showing us the unanimity of the casuists, the author presents them, as it were, on the same line, and as contemporaries. It would have been more instructive to have dated them, and given to each his appointed period; and thus, according to his merits in the progressive development of casuistry, to show how they severally advanced towards perfection, outbidding, surpassing, and eclipsing one another.

In so great a rivalry, it was necessary to make every effort, and set all their wits to work. The penitent having the option, might become difficult. He wanted his absolution at a cheaper rate every day; and they who would not lower their price lost their customers. It was business that required a clever man to find out, in so great a relaxation, by what means further indulgence might be given. A fine, elastic, and indulgent science, that, instead of imposing rules, adapted itself to proportions, narrowing or widening, and taking measurement, as the case might be. Every progress of this kind, being carefully noted down, served as a starting-post to go further. In countries that have once become aguish, fever produces fever; the sick inhabitant neglecting the precaution for preserving health, filth accumulates on filth, the waters form marshes, and the miasma grows stronger; a close, heavy, and noxious atmosphere oppresses the country. The people crawl or lie down. Do not speak to them of attempting any remedy; they are accustomed to the fever; they have had it on and off ever since their birth, and their forefathers had it. Why try remedies? The country has been in the same state from time immemorial; it would be almost a pity, according to these authorities, to make a change.

## CHAPTER IV.

CONVENTS.—NEIGHBOURHOOD OF CONVENTS.—CONVENTS IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.—CONTRAST WITH THE MIDDLE AGE.—THE DIRECTOR.—DISPUTE ABOUT THE DIRECTION OF THE NUNS.—THE JESUITS TRIUMPH THROUGH CALUMNY.

AN ingenuous and intellectual German lady told me one day that, when she came with her husband to Paris for the first time, they had wandered about in a grand but very dull quarter of the town, where they made an infinite number of turns and windings without being able to find their way. They had entered by a public garden, and found at last another public garden that brought them out again at the quay. I saw that she meant the learned and pious neighbourhood, which contains so many convents and colleges, and reaches from the Luxembourg to the "Jardin des Plantes."

"I saw," said this lady, "whole streets with gardens, surrounded with high walls, that reminded me of the deserted districts of Rome, where the *malaria* prevails, with this difference, that these were not deserted, but, as it were, mysteriously inhabited, shut up, mistrustful, and inhospitable. Other streets, exceedingly dark, were in a manner buried between two rows of lofty grey houses with no front aspect, and which showed, as it were in derision, their walled-up windows, or their rivetted lattices, turned upside down, by which one may see — nothing. We asked our way several times, and it was often pointed out to us; but some how or other, after having gone up and down and up again, we ever found ourselves at the same point. Our *ennui* and fatigue increased. We invincibly and fatally met with the same dull streets, and the same dismal houses sullenly shut, which seemed to look at us with an evil eye. Exhausted at last, and seeing no end to the puzzle, oppressed more and more by a certain dispiriting influence that

seemed to ooze from these walls, I sat down upon a stone, and began to weep."

A dispiriting lassitude does indeed seize and oppress our hearts, at the very sight of these disagreeable-looking houses; the most cheerful are the hospitals. Having been for the most part built or rebuilt in those times of solemn dulness, the reigns of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV., there is nothing about them to remind us of the lovely art of the *renaissance*; the latest memento of that art is the Florentine front of the Luxembourg Palace. All those houses that were built at a later period, even those which affect a certain severe luxury, (the Sorbonne, for example,) are occasionally great, but never grand. With their lofty pointed roofs, and stiff straight lines, they have always a dry, dull, and monotonous appearance, a *priestly* or *old-maidenish* look. In this they scarcely belie themselves, the greater part of them having been built to accommodate the numberless females belonging to the nobility and upper class of citizens, who, in order to enrich a son, condemned their unfortunate daughters to a sad, but decent death.

The monuments of the middle ages have a melancholy, but not a dispiriting look; we feel, on looking at them, the vigour and sincerity of the sentiment that inspired their builders; they are not, generally speaking, official monuments, but living works of the people, the offspring of their faith. But these, on the contrary, are nothing else than the creation of a class, — that class of newly created nobles that swarmed into life in the seventeenth century by subserviency, the ante-chamber, and ministerial offices. They are hospitals opened for the daughters of these families. Their great number might almost deceive us as to the strength and extent of the religious re-action of that time. Look at them well, and tell me, I pray you, whether you can discern the least trace about them of the ascetic character; are they religious houses, hospitals, barracks, or colleges? There is nothing to prove what they are. They would be perfectly fit for any civil purpose. They have but one character, but it is a very decided one; serious uniformity, decent mediocrity, and *ennui*. — It is *ennui* itself, personified in

an architectural form — a palpable, tangible, and visible *ennui*.

The reason of these houses being indefinitely multiplied is, that the austerity of the ancient rules having been then much modified, parents had less hesitation in making their daughters take the vail; for it was no longer burying them alive. The parlours were saloons frequented by crowds, under the pretext of being edified. Fine ladies came there to confide their secrets, filling the minds of the nuns with intrigues and vexations, and troubling them with useless regrets.

These worldly cares caused the interior of the convents to appear to them still more dismal; for there they had nothing but trifling insipid ceremonies, a sort of modified austerity, and an idle and empty routine of monotonous life.

Monastic life was quite a different thing in the middle ages; it was much more serious. There were then in the convents both more training for death, and a more active life. The system was, generally speaking, based upon two principles, which were sincerely and strictly adhered to; the destruction of the body, and the vivification of the soul. To war against the body they employed an exterminating fasting, excessive vigils, and frequent bleeding. For the development of the soul, the monks and nuns were made to read, transcribe\*, and sing. Up to the eleventh century they understood what they sang, as there was but little difference between Latin and the vulgar tongues of that period. The service had then a dramatic character, which sustained and constantly captivated the attention; many things that have been reduced to simple words, were then expressed in gestures and pantomimes; what is now

\* The regulations of St. Césaire and others ordered the nuns to transcribe manuscripts. (*See my Notice on the Education of Women in the Middle Ages*, at the end of the third edition of the "Introduction to Universal History.") Several of the beautiful miniatures which ornament them, painted with love and infinite patience, plainly show them to have been done by a woman's hand. Who would believe that it is a crime in our days for a nun to know how to draw, or to gather flowers to paint them? We have learnt it is so (among so many other curious things concerning the interior of convents), from the revelations of sister Marie Lemourier, *Mémoire du Maître Tilliard*, 1845. Caen.



spoken was then *acted*.\* When they inflicted upon worship that serious, sober, and wearisome character that it still wears, the nuns were still allowed, as an indemnification, pious reading, legends, the lives of saints, and other books that had been translated; for instance, the admirable French version of the "Imitation."† All these consolations were taken from them in the sixteenth century; the discovery was made, that it was dangerous to give them too great a taste for reading. In the seventeenth, even singing appeared to be an object of suspicion to many confessors; they were afraid the nuns might grow tender in singing the praises of God.‡

But what did they give them as a substitute? What did they get in return for all those services which they no longer understood, for their reading and singing that were now denied them, and for so many other comforts, of which they were successively deprived?

Was it an inanimate object? No, it was a man; let us speak out plainly, the *director*. The director was a novelty, hardly known to the middle ages, contented with the confessor.

Yes, a man is to inherit all this vast vacant place: his conversation and teaching are to fill up the void. Prayers, reading, if it be permitted, every thing, will be done according to his direction and by him. God, whom they imbibed in their books, or in their sight, even God is henceforward dispensed to them by this man—measured out to them day by day according to the standard of his heart.

Ideas come crowding here—but they must wait; we will examine them afterwards. Now they would only interrupt the thread of our historical deduction.

At the first outbreak of religious re-action, the nuns were generally governed by the friars of their order. The Bernardin nuns were directed by the Bernardin friars, the Carmelite nuns by the Carmelite friars, and the nuns of St. Elizabeth by the Picpus friars. The Capuchin nuns were not only confessed by

\* See my "Origines du Droit," and De Martene, De Ritibus.

† History of France, vol. v. p. 15.

‡ Châteaubriand, Vie de Rancé, pp. 227—229.

their friars, but were fed at their expense, and by the produce of their begging.\*

The monks did not long preserve this exclusive possession. For more than a quarter of a century, priests, monks, and friars of every order, carried on a furious war against one another on this question. This mysterious empire of shut-up and dependent women, over whom unlimited sway may be held, was, not without reason, the common aim of the ambition of all. Such houses, apparently quiet and strangers to the world, nevertheless are always grand centres of action. Here was an immense power for the orders that should get possession of it; and for individuals, whether priests or friars, it was (let them confess it, or not,) an affair of passion.

What I say here, I say of the purest and most austere, who are often the most tender. The honourable attachment of Cardinal Bérulle for the Carmelite nuns, whom he had brought here, was known to every body. He had lodged them near his house; he visited them every hour of the day, and even in the evening; the Jesuits said, *at night*. It was to them he went when he was ill, in order to get better. When Paris was infested by the plague, he said he would not leave it, "on account of his nuns."

The Oratorians and the Jesuits, naturally enemies and adversaries, joined together at first in a common cause to remove the Carmelite friars from the direction of these nuns; but no sooner had they succeeded, than they began to dispute with each other.

The austere order of the Carmelites, which spread but little in France, obtained its importance as the *beau idéal* of penitence, a sort of religious poetry; the enthusiastic spirit of Saint Theresa still animated them. There it was that the most violent converts came to seek refuge; and there it was, also, that those whose wounds were too deep, and who, like Madame de la Vallière, sought death as their last resource, came to die.

But the two great institutions of this age, those which expressed its spirit and had an immense development, were

\* See Héliot; and, for Paris especially, Félibien, who is very diffuse on this subject.

the Visitandines and the Ursulines. The former had, in the reign of Louis XIV., about a hundred and fifty monasteries, and the latter from three to four hundred.

The Visitandines were, as is well known, the most gentle of these orders: they awaited the coming of their divine Bridegroom in a state of inaction; and their sluggish life was well calculated to make them visionaries. We know the astonishing success of Marie Alacoque, and how it was turned to account by the Jesuits.

The Ursulines, a more useful body, devoted themselves to education. In the three hundred and fifty convents which belonged to them in this century, they educated, at the smallest computation, thirty-five thousand young girls. This vast establishment for education, directed by skilful hands, might, indeed, become a political engine of enormous power.

The Ursulines and the Visitandines were governed by bishops, who appointed their confessors. St. François de Sales, so excellent a friend to the Jesuits and friars in general, had showed himself distrustful of them in the subject that was dearest to his heart, that of the Visitation: — “My opinion is (says he, in some part of his works), that these good girls do not know what they want, if they wish to submit themselves to the superiority of the friars, who, indeed, are excellent servants of God; but it always goes hard for girls to be governed by the orders, *who are accustomed to take from them the holy liberty of the mind.*” \*

It is but too easy to perceive how the orders of women servilely reproduced the minds of the men who directed them. Thus, the devotion of those who were governed by monks was characterised by every species of caprice, eccentricity, and violence; whilst they who were under the direction of secular priests, such as the Oratorians and the Doctrinaires, show some faint traces of reason, together with a sort of narrow-minded, common-place, and unproductive wisdom.

The nuns, who received from the bishops their ordinary confessors, chose for themselves an extraordinary one besides,

who, as being extraordinary, did not fail to supplant and annul the former : the latter was, in most cases, a Jesuit. Thus the new orders of the Ursulines and Visitandines, created by priests, who had endeavoured to keep friars out of them, fell, nevertheless, under the influence of the latter : the priests sowed, but the Jesuits reaped the harvest.

Nothing did greater service to the cause of the Jesuits than their constantly repeating that their austere founder had expressly forbidden them ever to govern the convents of women. This was true, as applied to convents generally, but false as regarded nuns in particular, and their special direction ; they did not, indeed, govern them collectively, but they directed them individually.

The Jesuit was not pestered with the daily detail of spiritual management, or the small fry of trifling faults. He did not fatigue ; he only interfered at the right time ; he was particularly useful in dispensing the nuns from telling the confessor what they wished to conceal. The latter became, by degrees, a sort of husband, whom they might disregard.

If he happened, indeed, to have any firmness in his composition, or to be able to exercise any influence, the others worked hard to get rid of him by force of calumny. We may form an opinion of the audacity of the Jesuits in this particular, since they did not fear to attack the Cardinal de Bérulle himself, notwithstanding his power.\* One of his relatives, living with the Carmelites, having become pregnant, they boldly accused him of the crime, though he had never set his foot within the convent. Finding no one to believe them, and seeing they would gain nothing by attacking him on the score of morality, they joined in a general outcry against his books. "They contained the hidden poison of a dangerous mysticism : the cardinal was too tender, too indulgent, and too weak, both as a theologian and a *director*." Astounding impudence ! when every body knew and saw what sort of directors they were themselves !

This, however, had, in time, the desired effect, if not against

\* Tabaraud, *Life of Bérulle*, vol. i. *passim*.

Bérulle, at least against the Oratory, who became disgusted with, and afraid of, the direction of the nuns, and at last abandoned it. This is a remarkable example of the all-powerful effects of calumny, when organised on a grand scale by a numerous body, vented by them, and continually sung in chorus. A band of thirty thousand men repeating the same thing every day throughout the Christian world! Who could resist that? This is the very essence of jesuitical art, in which they are unrivalled. At the very creation of their order, a sentence was applied to them, similar to those well-known verses in which Virgil speaks of the Romans : —

“ *Exudent alii spirantia mollis aera,*” &c. &c.

Others shall animate brass, or give life to marble; they (the Romans) shall excel in other arts. “Remember, Jesuit, thy art is calumny.”

## CHAPTER V.

REACTION OF MORALITY.—ARNAUD, 1643.—PASCAL, 1657 — BASENESS OF THE JESUITS.—HOW THEY GET HOLD OF THE KING AND THE POPE, AND IMPOSE SILENCE UPON THEIR ENEMIES.—DISCOURAGEMENT OF THE JESUITS.—THEIR CORRUPTION.—THEY PROTECT THE FIRST QUIETISTS.—IMMORALITY OF QUIETISM.—DESMARETS DE SAINT SORLIN.—MORIN BURNT; 1663.

MORALITY was weakened, but not quite extinct. Though undermined by the casuists, jesuitism, and by the intrigues of the clergy, it was saved by the laity. The age presents us this contrast. The priests, even the best of them, the Cardinal de Bérulle for instance, rush into the world, and into politics; while illustrious persons among the laity, such as Descartes and Poussin, retire to seek solitude. The philosophers turn monks, and the saints become men of business.

Each set of people will acquire what it desires in this century. One party will have power; they will succeed in obtaining the banishment of the Protestants, the proscription of the Jansenists, and the submission of the Gallicans to the pope. Others will have science; Descartes and Galileo give the movements; Leibnitz and Newton furnish the harmony. That is to say, the Church will triumph in temporal affairs, and the laity will obtain the spiritual power.

From the desert where our great lay-monks then took refuge a purer breeze begins to blow. We feel that a new age now commences, modern age, the age of work, following that of disputes. No more dreams, no more school-divinity. We must now begin to work in earnest, early and before daylight. It is rather cold, but no matter; it is the refreshing coolness of the dawn, as after those beautiful nights in the North, where a young queen of twenty goes to visit Descartes, at four in the morning, to learn the application of algebra to geometry.

This serious and exalted spirit, which revived philosophy

and modified literature, had necessarily some influence on theology. It found a resting point, though a very minute and still imperceptible one, in the assembly of the friends of Port-Royal; it added grandeur to their austerity, morality asserted its own claims, and religion awoke to a sense of her danger.

Every thing was going on prosperously for the Jesuits; as confessors of kings, grantees, and fine ladies, they saw their morality every where in full bloom; when in this serene atmosphere, the lightning flashes and the thunderbolt falls. I speak of Arnaud's book, entitled "*Frequent Communion*" (1643), so unexpected and so overwhelming.

Not only the Jesuits and jesuitism were struck by the blow, but, in general, all that portion of Christendom, which was enervated by an easy indulgence. Christianity appeared again austere and grave; the world again saw with awe the pale face of its crucified Saviour. He came to say again, in the name of grace, what natural reason equally asserts — that there is no real expiation without repentance. What became of all their petty arts of evasion in presence of this severe truth? What became of their worldly devotions and romantic piety, together with all the Philotheas, Erotheas, and their imitations? The contrast appeared odious.

Other writers have said, and will say, all this much better. I am not writing here the history of Jansenism. The theological question is now become obsolete. The moral question still survives, and history owes it one word, for it cannot remain indifferent between the honest and the dishonest. Whether the Jansenist did or did not exaggerate the doctrine of grace, we must still call this party, as it deserves to be, in this grand struggle, the party of virtue.

Arnaud and Pascal are so far from having gone too far against their adversaries, that one might easily show they stopped short of the mark, of their own accord, that they did not wish to make use of all their arms, and were afraid (in attacking, on certain delicate points, the jesuitical direction,) of doing harm to direction in general, and to confession.

Ferrier, the Jesuit, avows that, after the terrible blow inflicted by the *Lettres Provinciales*, the Jesuits were crushed,

and that they fell into derision and contempt. A multitude of bishops condemned them, and not one stood up in their defence.

One of the means they employed to mend their case was, to say boldly that the opinions with which they were reproached were not those of the Society, but of a few individuals. They were answered that, as all their books were examined by the chief, they belonged thus to the whole body. No matter: to amuse the simple, they got a few of their order to write against their own doctrine. A Spanish Jesuit wrote against Ultramontaniam. Another, the Father Gonzalia, wrote a book against the casuists: he was very useful to them. When, in course of time, Rome was at last ashamed of their doctrine, and disavowed them, they put Gonzalia forward, printed his book, and made him their general. Even in our own time, it is this book and this name that they oppose to us. Thus they have an answer for every thing. Should you like indulgence, take Escobar; should you prefer severity, take Gonzalia.

Let us now see what was the result of this general contempt into which they fell after the *Provinciales*. Public conscience having received such good warning, every one apparently will hasten to shun them. Their confession will be avoided and their colleges deserted. You think so? Then you are much mistaken.

They are too necessary to the corruption of the age. How could the king, with his two-fold adultery posted up in the face of all Europe, make his devotions without them? Fathers Ferrier, Canard\*, and Lachaise, will remain with him till the end, like pieces of furniture that are too convenient to be dispensed with.

But does not Rome perceive how much she is compromised by such allies? Is it not incumbent on her to separate from them?

Feeble attempts were not wanting. A pope condemned the apology of the casuists that the J suits had risked. The energy of Rome went no further: if any remained, it was employed against the enemies of the Jesuits. The latter got the upper

\* He it was who would be called only by his Latinised name, Annat.



hand; they had succeeded, in the beginning of the century, in getting the head of the church to impose silence on the doctrine of grace, as defended by the Dominicans; and they silenced it again, in the middle of the century, when it recommenced speaking by the mouth of the Jansenists.

The Jesuits showed their gratitude to Rome, for imposing this silence a second time, by stretching still further the infallibility of the pope. They did not fear to build up still higher this falling Tower of Babel; they increased it by two stories: first, they asserted (by their Bellarmin) the infallibility of the pope *in matters of faith*. Secondly, when the danger had become imminent, they took a bold and foolish step; but it secured to them the friendship of Rome; they made the pope do in his decrepitude what he had never dared to do in his power — declare himself infallible *in matters of fact*.

And this at the very moment that Rome was obliged to confess that she was wrong about the greatest facts of nature and history. Not to speak of the New World, which she was obliged to admit, after having denied it, she condemns Galileo, and then she submits to his system, adopts and teaches it: the penance that she imposed on him for one day has, since Galileo, been inflicted upon herself for two hundred years.\*

Here is another fact, still graver in one sense: —

The fundamental right of popes, the title of their power, those famous Decrees which they quoted and defended, as long as criticism, unaided by the art of printing, failed to enlighten mankind; — well! the pope is obliged to confess that these very Decrees are a tissue of lies and imposture.†

What! when popery has disclaimed its own words, and given itself the lie on the fundamental fact, upon which its own right depends, is it then that the Jesuits claim for her infallibility in matters of fact?

The Jesuits have been the tempters and corrupters of popes

\* They will say, these are material sciences, and that they are spiritual men. To that I answer, he who does not understand the natural, has no right to distinguish the supernatural from it, nor decide about it.

† By the instrumentality of the two cardinals and librarians of the Vatican, Bellarmin and Baronius, one of whom was the confessor of the pope.

as well as of kings. They caught kings by their concupiscence, and popes by their pride.

It is a laughable, but touching sight to see this poor little Jansenist party, then so great in genius and heart\*, resolute in making an appeal to the justice of Rome, and remaining on their knees before this mercenary judge!†

The Jesuits were not so blind but that they saw that popery, foolishly propped up by them in theology, was miserably losing ground in the political world. In the beginning of the 17th century the pope was still powerful; he whipped Henry IV. in the person of the Cardinal d'Ossat. But in the middle of that century, after all the great efforts of the Thirty Years' War, the pope was not even consulted in the treaty of Westphalia; and in that of the Pyrenees, between catholic Spain and very-christian France, they forgot that he existed.

The Jesuits had undertaken what was perfectly impossible; and the principal engine they employed for it — the monopoly of the rising generation — was not less impossible. Their greatest effort had been directed to this point; they had succeeded in getting into their hands the greater part of the children of the nobility and of people of fortune; they had contrived, by means of education, a machine to narrow the mind, and crush the intellect. But such was the vigour of modern invention, that in spite of the most ingenious machinery to annihilate invention, the first generation produced Descartes, the second the author of *Tartuffe*, and the third Voltaire.

The worst of it is, by the light of this great modern flam-

\* Who can see in the Louvre the tragical portrait of one of the Arnauds without emotion? Her pale face, so pure and so austere, like a transparent alabaster lamp illuminated by the inward flame, the flame of grace — the flame also of battles. But how can we accuse them — persecuted, and given up to those whom every body despised? Virtue and genius oppressed by cunning! I never go to the Museum without looking also at the touching picture of the young nun of Port-Royal, saved by a prayer. Ah! these girls were saints we must say; whether we like their spirit of resistance or not, they were saints; and, moreover, under the form of that age, real defenders of liberty.

† Read, however, the immortal 5th letter of Nicole (*Imaginaries and Visionaries*, vol. i. p. 140.), which is as eloquent as the *Provinciales*, and much bolder.

beau which they had been unable to extinguish, they saw their own deformity. They knew what they were, and began to despise themselves. No one is so hardened in lying as to deceive himself entirely. They were obliged tacitly to confess that their *probabilism*, or doctrine of probability\*, was at bottom but doubt, and the absence of all principle. They could not help discovering that they, the most Christian of all societies, and the champions of the faith, were only sceptics.

Of faith? — what faith? It was not, at any rate, Christian faith: all their theology had no other tendency than to ruin the base on which Christianity is founded — grace and salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Champions of a principle? No; but agents of a plot, occupied with one project, and this an impossible one — the restoration of popery.

Some few Jesuits resolved to seek a remedy in themselves for their fallen condition. They avowed frankly the urgent need that the Society had of reform. Their chief, a German, dared to attempt this reform; but it went hard with him: the great majority of the Jesuits wished to maintain the abuses, and they deprived him of all power.†

These good workmen, who had been so successful in justifying the enjoyments of others, wanted to enjoy themselves in their turn. They chose for their general a man after their own heart, amiable, gentle, and kind, the epicure Oliva. Rome, recently governed by Madame Olympia, was in a season of indulgence; Oliva, retiring to his delightful villa, said, "Business to-morrow," and left the Society to govern itself after its own fashion.

Some became merchants, bankers, and cloth-makers for the profit of their establishments. Others following more closely

\* The doctrine of probability was, that a man might, with a safe conscience, follow an opinion or precept recommended by four, or three, or two doctors, or even by one doctor of high reputation, though it were contrary to his sentiment who followed it, and even to his who recommended it. Mosheim, Eccles. Hist. 16th century, sect. 3. part 1. ch. 1. note 182.—  
TRANSL.

† This episode in the history of the Jesuits, though much obscured by them, has been cleared up by Ranke from manuscript documents.

the example of the pope, worked for their nephews, and transacted the business of their families. The idle wits frequented the public walks, coquetted, and made madrigals. Others again found amusement in chatting to the nuns, in the little secrets of women, and in sensual inquisitiveness. Their rulers, lastly, who found themselves excluded from the society of women, became too often the Thyrsis and Corydons of the Colleges; the consequence was in Germany a formidable investigation\*; when a great number of the proud and austere German houses were found to be criminal.

The Jesuits, who had fallen so low both in theory and practice, increased their party at the risk of the strangest auxiliaries. Whoever declared himself an enemy of the Jansenists became their friend. Hence arose the immoral inconsistency of the Society—its perfect indifference to systems. These people, who for more than half a century had been fighting for free will, formed a sudden alliance, without any intervening period of transition, with the mystics who confounded all their liberty in God. Just before they had been reproached with following the principles of pagan philosophers and jurisconsults, who attribute every thing to justice and nothing to grace or love; now they receive quietism at its birth with open arms, and the preacher of love, the visionary Desmarets de St. Sorlin.

Desmarets had, it is true, done them some essential service. He had succeeded in dismembering Port-Royal, by gaining over some of the nuns. He assisted them powerfully in destroying poor Morin, another visionary more original and more innocent, who fancied himself to be the Holy Ghost.† He tells us himself how, being encouraged by Father Canard (Annat) the king's confessor, he gained the confidence of this unfortunate man,

\* A few copies were reprinted in 1843. Mr. Nodier gave me this very curious rarity; but I have mislaid it.

† A belief common to the middle ages. \* Morin is a man of the middle ages who had wandered into the 17th century. His *Pensées* (1647) contain much originality and eloquence. Among other things there is this fine verse (p. 164.), "You know that love changes into itself what it loves." Morin's life was innocent; his cruel sentence reproaches him with nothing on the score of morality. Desmarets destroyed him through jealousy: he wanted to turn prophet on his own account, and was not contented with being the St. John the Baptist of the new Messiah.

made him believe he was his disciple, and drew from him written documents, by means of which he caused him to be burnt (1663).

The protection of this all-powerful confessor gained for the most extravagant books of Desmarets the approbation of the Archbishop of Paris. He declared in them that he was a prophet, and undertook to raise for the king and the pope an army of a hundred and forty-four thousand *devots*, as knights of papal infallibility, to exterminate, in concert with Spain, the Turks and the Jansenists.

These *devots*, or victims of love, were self-sacrificed people, who affected a sort of inward annihilation, and who lived henceforth only in God. Hence they could do no harm. The soul, said this prophet, having become a nonentity, cannot consent; so that whatever it may do, inasmuch as it has not consented, it has not sinned. It no longer thinks at all, either of what it has done, or of what it has not done; for it has done nothing at all. God being all in us, does all, and suffers all; the devil can no longer find the creature, either in itself or in its acts, for it acts no longer. By an entire dissolution of ourselves, the virtue of the Holy Ghost flows into us, and we become wholly God, by a miraculous *deiformity*. If there be still any thing jarring in the grosser part, the purer part knows nothing of it; but both these parts, being subtilised and rarefied, change at last into God; "*God then abides with the emotions of sensuality, all of which are sanctified.*" \*

Desmarets did not confine himself to printing this doctrine with the privilege of the king and the approbation of the archbishop. Strongly supported by the Jesuits, he ran from convent to convent preaching to the nuns. Layman as he was, he had made himself a director of female youth. He related to them his dreams of devout gallantry, and inquired about their carnal temptations. It seemed that a man so perfectly self-annihilated might write fearlessly the strangest things—the following letter for instance:—"I embrace you, my very dear love, in your nonentity, being a perfect nullity myself, each of us being all in our All, by our amiable Jesus," &c.

\* Desmarets de St. Sorlin's *Delight of the Spirit*, 29th *journée*, p. 170. See also his spiritual letters, &c.

What progress is here made in a few years, since the "Provincial Letters!" What has become of the casuists? Those simple people who took and effaced transgressions one by one, giving themselves immense trouble. They are all scattered to the winds.

Casuistry was an art that had its masters, doctors, and cunning men. But now, what need of doctors? Every *spiritual* man, every devout person, every Jesuit in a short robe, can speak, as well as he in the long one, the soft language of pious tenderness. The Jesuits have fallen, but jesuitism has gained ground. It is no longer requisite to *direct the attention* every day for every distinct case by special equivocations. Love, that mingles and confounds every thing, is the sovereign, most gentle and powerful equivocation. Lull the will to sleep, and there is no longer any intention, "the soul, losing its nonentity in its infinity," will be gently annihilated in the bosom of love.

## CHAPTER VI.\*

CONTINUATION OF MORAL REACTION. — TARTUFFE, 1664—1669. — REAL TARTUFFES. — WHY TARTUFFE IS NOT YET A QUIETIST.

THE devotee caught in the fact by the man of the world, the churchman excommunicated by the comedian — this is the meaning and aim of the *Tartuffe*.\*

The grand moral question, put by Plato in his Athenian *Tartuffe* (the *Euthyphron*), "Can there be *sanctity* without *justice*?" this question so clear in itself, but so skilfully obscured by casuists, was again put forward in open daylight. The theatre re-established religious morality†, which had been so endangered in the churches.

The author of the *Tartuffe* chose his subject, not in society in general, but in a more limited space, in the family circle, the fire-side, the holy of holies of modern life. This dramatist, this impious being, was, of all men in the world, the one who had most at heart the religion of the family, though he had no family himself. He was both tender and melancholy, and sometimes, in speaking of himself and his domestic griefs, he would utter this grave but characteristic sentence: "I ought to have fore-

\* The appearance of the *Tartuffe*, and the conquest of Flanders, mark the literary and political apogee of the age of Louis XIV. France, which till then represents the modern principle, turns afterwards against it, attacks Holland, and thus prepares the way for the alliance of Holland and England, that is to say, the greatness of England and her own ruin.

† A freethinker, Saint Evremond, writes to his friend, "I have just read *Tartuffe* . . . . if I am saved, I shall owe my salvation to him. Devotion is so reasonable in the mouth of Cléante, that it makes me renounce all my philosophy; and false devotees are so well described, that the shame of their likeness will induce them to abandon hypocrisy. Holy piety, how much good you will confer on the world!" A letter quoted in the edition of Mr. Aimé-Martin (1857), vol. iii. p. 125.

seen that one thing made me unfit for family society ; which is my austerity.\*

The *Tartuffe*, that grand and sublime picture, is very simple in its outline. Had it been more complicated, it had been less popular. *Mental restriction* and the *direction of intention*, which every body had laughed at since the "Provincial Letters," were sufficient matter for Molière. He did not venture to bring the new doctrine of mysticism on the stage, being as yet too little known or too dangerous.

Had he employed the jargon of Desmarets and the earlier quietists, and put into the mouth of Tartuffe their mystic tendernesses, the result would have been the same as that of his ridiculous sonnet in the *Misanthrope* — the pit would have wondered what it meant.

The evening before the first representation of Tartuffe, Molière read the piece to Ninon ; "and to pay him back in his own coin, she related to him a similar adventure she had had with a wretch of that species, whose portrait she drew in such lively and natural colours, that if the piece had not been composed, he said he never would have undertaken it."

What then, could be wanting to this master-piece, this drama of such profound conception and powerful execution ? Nothing, certainly, but what was excluded by the state of religion at that time, and by the customs of our theatre.

Still one thing was wanting, which was impossible to be shown in so short a drama (though in fact it constitutes the real essence of the characters), I mean the preparatory management, the long windings by which he makes his approaches, his patience in stratagems, and his gradual fascination.

Every thing is strongly told, but rather abruptly. This man, received into the house out of charity, — this low rogue, this glutton who eats as much as six, this red-eared villain — how did he grow bold so suddenly and aspire so high ? A declaration of love from such a man to such a lady, from an intended

\* See his life by Grimarest, the ingenious notice of Mr. Génin (the French Plutarch), and the important work by Mr. E. Noël "On the Biography of Molière, as found in his Comedies" (in the press).



son-in-law to his future mother-in-law, still astonishes when we read it. On the stage, perhaps, we countenance it more easily.

Elmira, when the holy man makes this surprising avowal to her face, is by no means prepared to listen to him. A real Tartuffe would have acted in a very different manner: he would have quietly sat down humble and patient, and waited for the favourable moment. If, for instance, Elmira had experienced the indiscretions and fickleness of those worldly lovers whom Tartuffe mentions, then, indeed, when she was worn out by these trials, and become weak, weary, and dispirited, he might have accosted her; then, perhaps, she would have allowed him to say, in the smooth quietist jargon, many things that she cannot listen to at the moment when Molière presents her before us.

Mademoiselle Bourignon, in her curious *Life*, which well deserves another edition, relates what danger she was in through a saint of this species. I shall let her speak for herself. But first you must know that the pious damsel, who had just become an heiress, was thinking about laying out her wealth in endowing convents, and in other similar acts of piety.

"Being, one day, in the streets of Lille, I met a man whom I did not know, who said to me as he passed, 'You will not do what you wish; you will do what you do not wish.' Two days after the same man came to my house and said, 'What did you think of me?' 'That you were either a fool or a prophet,' replied I. 'Neither,' said he; 'I am a poor fellow from a village near Douai, and my name is Jean de St. Saulieu; I have no other thought but that of charity. I lived first of all with a hermit, but now I have my *curé*, Mr. Roussel, for a director. I teach poor children to read. The sweetest — the most charitable act you could do would be to collect all the little female orphans; they have become so numerous since the wars! The convents are rich enough.' He spoke for three hours together with much unction.

"I inquired about him, of the *curé*, his director, who assured me that he was a person of a truly apostolical zeal. (We should observe that the *curé* had tried at first to catch this rich heiress

for his own nephew ; the nephew not succeeding, he employed one of his own creatures.) Saint Saulieu frequently repeated his visits, speaking divinely of spiritual things. I could not understand how a man without any preparatory study could speak in so sublime a manner of the divine mysteries. I believed him to be really inspired by the Holy Ghost. He said himself that he was dead to nature. He had been a soldier, and had returned from the wars as chaste as a child. By dint of abstinence he had lost the taste of food, and could no longer distinguish wine from beer ! He passed the greater part of his time on his knees in the churches. He was seen to walk in the street with a modest air and downcast eyes, never looking at any thing, as if he had been alone in the world. He visited the poor and sick, giving away all he possessed. In winter time, if he saw a poor man without a garment, he would draw him aside, take off his own coat, and give it him. My heart overflowed with joy to see that there were still such men in the world. I thanked God, and thought I had found the counterpart of myself. Priests and other pious persons put the same confidence in him, went to consult him, and receive his good advice.

“It was quite foreign to my feelings to quit my peaceful retreat, and establish the asylum for children that Saint Saulieu had recommended to me. But he brought me a tradesman who had begun the same thing, and who offered me a house where he had already located a few poor little girls. I took possession in November, 1653. I cleaned these children. They were shockingly dirty, but after a great deal of trouble, I cleaned them myself, having nobody with me who liked the occupation. But at last I made a rule, and followed it myself, putting every thing in common, and making every one eat at the same table. I kept myself as retired as I could ; but I was obliged to speak to all sorts of persons. Friars came, as well as devotees whose conversations did not much please me. . . . I was frequently sick to death.

“The house in which Saint Saulieu taught having been destroyed, and himself sent away, he went to live with the tradesman of whom I have already spoken. They solicited me

to make an asylum, like mine, for boys. In order to raise a necessary fund, Saint Saulieu was to take an office in the town on lease, that brought in two thousand franks a year, and the revenue was to be applied to this foundation, myself being security for him. He received the produce of one year, and then said it was necessary, before any thing was done, to receive for another year, to furnish the house. This made four thousand franks; and when he had got six thousand, he kept the whole, saying it was the fruit of his labour, and that he had well earned it.

"I had not waited for this to make me distrustful of the man; I had had some strange inward misgivings on his account. One day, methought I saw a black wolf sporting with a white lamb. Another day, it was the heart of Saint Saulieu, and a little Moorish child with a crown and sceptre of gold sitting upon it, as if the devil had been the king of his heart. I did not conceal these visions from him; but he grew angry, and said I ought to confess myself, for thinking so badly of my neighbour; that he could not be a black wolf; for, on the contrary, the more he approached me, the more pure and chaste he became.

"One day, however, he told me that we ought to be married, only for spiritual love; and that such a union would enable us to do still more good. To this I answered, that marriage was not requisite for such a union. He made me, however, little demonstrations of friendship, to which, at first, I paid no attention. At last, he suddenly threw off the mask, told me he loved me desperately; that for many years he had studied spiritual books, the better to win me; and that now having so much access to me, I must be his wife, either by love or force. . . and he approached to caress me. I was very angry, and commanded him to go. Then, he burst into tears, fell on his knees, and said, 'The devil tempted me.' I was simple enough to believe and to pardon him.

"This was not the end of the affair: he was always recommencing his attack, following me every where, and entering my house in spite of my girls." He went so far as to hold a knife to my throat to force me to yield. . . . At the same time he said

every where that he had gained his suit, and that I was his promised wife. I complained in vain to his confessor; I then appealed to justice, who allowed me two men to guard my house, and began an inquiry. Saint Saulieu soon absconded from Lille, and went to Ghent, where he found one of my girls, who was a great devotee and passed for a mirror of perfection: he lived with her, and she became *enceinte*. The way he arranged the Lille affair was this:—He had a brother among the Jesuits, and they employed their friends so well, that he got off by paying the costs of justice, retracting his calumny, and acknowledging that I was an honest woman.”\*

This took place between 1653 and 1658, consequently only a few years before the representation of Molière's *Tartuffe*, who wrote the three first acts in 1664. Every thing leads us to believe that such adventures were not rare at that period. *Tartuffe*, *Orgon*, and all the other personages of this truly historical piece, are not abstract beings, pure creations of art, like the heroes of *Corneille* or *Racine*; they are real men, caught in the act, and taken from nature.

What strikes us in *Mademoiselle de Bourignon's* Flemish *Tartuffe* is his patience to study and learn mysticism, in order to speak its language, and again his perseverance in associating himself for whole years with the thoughts of the pious maiden.

If Molière had not been confined in so narrow a frame, if his *Tartuffe* had had the time to prepare better his advances, if he had been able (the thing was then, no doubt, too dangerous) to take the cloak of *Desmarets* and *Quietism* in its birth, he might have advanced still further in his designs without being discovered. Then he would not in the very beginning have made to the person he wants to seduce the very illogical confession, that he is a cheat. He would not have ventured the expression, “If it be only heaven.” (act. iv. scene 5.). Instead of unmasking abruptly this ugly corruption, he would have varnished it over, and unveiled it by degrees. From one ambiguous phrase to another, and by a cunning transition, he would have contrived

\* I have abridged and united the two accounts given by *Mademoiselle de Bourignon*. See at the end of vol. i. of her *Œuvres* (Amsterdam, 1686), pp. 68—80., and pp. 188—197.

to make corruption take the appearance of perfection. Who knows ? he would, perhaps, at last have succeeded, like many others, in finding it unnecessary to be a hypocrite any longer, and have finished by imposing on himself, cheating and seducing himself into the belief that he was a saint. It is then he would have been Tartuffe in the superlative degree, being so not only for the world, but for himself, having perfectly confounded within himself every ray of good, and reposing in evil with a tranquillity secured by his ignorance, counterfeit at first, but afterwards become natural.

## CHAPTER VII.

APPARITION OF MOLINOS, 1675. — HIS SUCCESS AT ROME. — FRENCH QUIETISTS. — MADAME GUYON. — HER DIRECTOR. — *THE TORRENTS*. — MYSTIC DEATH. — DO WE RETURN FROM IT.

*THE Spiritual Guide* of Molinos appeared at Rome in 1675. The way having been prepared for twenty years by different publications of the same tendency, highly approved of by the inquisitors of Rome and Spain, this book had a success unparalleled in the age : in twelve years it was translated and reprinted twenty times.\*

We must not be surprised that this guide to annihilation, this method to die, was received so greedily ; there was then throughout Europe a general feeling of wearisomeness. That century, still far from its close, already panted for repose. This appears to be the case by its own doctrines. Cartesianism, which gave it an impulse, became inactive and contemplative in Mallebranche (1674). Spinoza, as early as 1670, had declared the immobility of God, man, and the world, in the unity of substance. And in 1676, Hobbes gave his theory of political fatalism.

Spinoza, Hobbes, and Molinos — death, every where, in metaphysics, politics, and morality ! What a dismal chorus ! They are of one mind without knowing each other or forming any compact ; they seem, however, to shout to each other from one extremity of Europe to the other !

Poor human liberty has nothing left but the choice of its suicide ; either to be hurled by logic in the North into the bottomless pit of Spinoza, or to be lulled in the South by the sweet voice of Molinos, into a death-like and eternal slumber.

\* This is the testimony borne by its enthusiastic admirer, the Archbishop of Palermo (at the head of the Latin translation, 1687).

The age is, however, as yet in all its brilliancy and triumph. Some time must pass away before these discouraging and deadly thoughts pass from theory to practice, and politics become infected with this moral languor.

It is a delicate and interesting moment in every existence, that middle term between the period of increasing vigour and that of old age, when, retaining its brilliancy, it loses its strength, and decay imperceptibly begins. In the month of August the trees have all their leaves, but soon they change colour, many a one grows pale, and in their splendid summer robe you have a presentiment of their autumnal decline.

For some time an impure and feverish wind had blown from the South, both from Italy and Spain: Italy was already too lifeless, too deeply entombed, to be able to produce even a doctrine of death. It was a Spaniard, established at Rome and imbued with Italian languor, who invented this theory and drew it forth into practice. Still it was necessary for his disciples to oblige him to write and publish. Molinos had, for twenty years, been satisfied with sowing his doctrine noiselessly in Rome, and propagating it gently from palace to palace. The theology of Quietism was wonderfully adapted to the city of catacombs, the silent city, where, from that time, scarcely any thing was heard but the faint rustling of worms crawling in the sepulchre.

When the Spaniard arrived in Rome, it had hardly recovered from the effeminate pontificate of Madame Olympia. The *crucified Jesus* reposed in the delicate hands of her general Oliva, among sumptuous *vines*, exotic flowers, lilies, and roses. These torpid Romans, this idle nobility, and these lazy fair ones, who pass their time on couches, with half-closed eyes, are the persons to whom Molinos comes at a late hour to speak — ought I to say *speak*? His low whispering voice, sinking into their lethargy, is confounded with their inward dream. Quietism had quite a different character in France. In a living country, the theory of death showed some symptoms of life. An infinite measure of activity was employed to prove that action was no longer necessary. This injured their doctrine, for noise and light were hurtful to it. This delicate plant loved darkness,

and sought to grow in the shade. Not to speak of the chimerical Desmaretz, who could but render an opinion ridiculous, Malaval seemed to have an idea, that this new doctrine outstepped Christianity. Concerning the words of Jesus, *I am the way*, he uses an expression surprising for this century: "Since he is the way, let us pass by him; *but, he who is always passing never arrives.*" \*

Our French Quietists by their lucid analysis, their rich and fertile developments, made known, for the first time, what had scarcely been dreamed of in the obscure form which Quietism had prudently preserved in other countries. Many things, that seemed in the bud hardly developed, appeared in Madame Guyon in full bloom, as clear as daylight, with the sun in the meridian. The singular purity of this woman rendered her intrepid in advancing the most dangerous ideas. She was as pure in her imagination as she was disinterested in her motives. She had no need to figure to herself the object of her pious love, under a material form.† This is what gives her mysticism a sublime superiority over the coarse and sensual devotion of the *Sacré-Cœur*, established by the *Visitandine*, Marie Alacoque, about the same period. Madame Guyon was far too intellectual to give a form to her God; she truly loved a spirit; hence sprang her confidence and unlimited courage. She attempts bravely, but without suspecting herself to be brave, the most perilous paths, now ascending, now descending into regions that others had most avoided; she presses boldly forward past the point where every one had stopped through fear, like the luminary which brightens every thing and remains unsullied itself. These courageous efforts, though innocent in so pure a woman, had nevertheless a dangerous effect upon the weak-minded. Her confessor, Father Lacombe, was wrecked in this dangerous gulf, where he was swallowed up and drowned. The person and the doctrine had equally deranged his faculties. All

\* Malaval, *Easy Practice*, 1670. The first part had been printed twice already.

† See her *Life* written by herself, (Cologne, 1720,) vol. i. p. 80. "My prayer was, from that time, free from all forms, ingredients, and images." See also p. 83., against visions.



we know of his intercourse with her betrays a strange weakness, which she, in her sublime aspirations, seems hardly to have condescended to notice. The very first time he saw her, then young, and tending her aged husband, he was so affected by the sight that he fainted. Afterwards, having become her humble disciple, under the name of her director, he followed her every where in her adventurous life, both in France and Savoy. He never left her side, "and could not dine without her." He had succeeded in getting her portrait taken. Being arrested at the same time as herself, in 1687, he was for ten years a prisoner in the fortresses of the Pyrenees. In 1698, they took advantage of the weakness of his mind to make him write to Madame Guyon a compromising letter\*: "The poor man," said she, laughing, "is become mad." He certainly was so, and, a few days after, he died at Charenton.

This madness little surprises me, when I read Madame Guyon's *Torrents*, that fantastic, charming, but fearful book. It must not be passed over in silence.

When she composed the book, she was at Annecy, in the convent of the *newly converted*. She had bestowed her wealth upon her family, and the small income she reserved for herself was also given away by her to this religious establishment, where she was very ill used. This delicate woman, who had passed her life in luxury, was forced to work with her hands beyond her strength; her employment was washing and sweeping. Father Lacombe, then in Rome, had recommended her to write whatever came into her mind. "It is to obey you," says she, "that I am beginning to write what I do not know myself." She takes a ream of paper, and writes down the title of her subject: — *Torrents*.

As the torrents of the Alps, the rivers, rivulets, and mountain streams, which tumble from their heights, rush with all their force towards the sea, even so our souls, by the effect of their spiritual inclination, hasten to return towards God to be blended with him. This comparison of living waters is not a simple text that serves her for a starting point; she follows it up

\* See Bossuet's *Correspondance* and the *Relation de Phélippeaux*, &c.

almost throughout the volume with renewed graces. One would suppose that this pleasing light style would tire us at last ; but it does not : we feel that it is not mere words and language, but that it springs and flows like life-blood from the heart. She is evidently an uninformed woman, who has read only the *Imitation*, the *Philothea* of Saint François, some few stories, and *Don Quixote* ; knows nothing at all, and has not seen much. Even these *Torrents*, which she describes, are not seen by her in the Alps, where she then is ; she sees them within herself ; she sees nature in the mirror of her heart.

In reading this book we seem absolutely as if we were on the brink of a cascade, pensively listening to the murmuring of the waters. They fall for ever and ever gently and charmingly, varying their uniformity by a thousand changes of sound and colour. Thence you see the approach of waters of every sort (images of human souls), rivers that flow only to reach other rivers, floods which pour forward to the ocean, but slowly ; broad majestic streams, all loaded with boats, goods, and passengers, and that are admired and blessed for the services they render. These streams are the souls of the saints and great doctors. There are also more rapid and eager waters which are good for nothing, on which no one dares to float, that rush forward, in headlong impatience, to reach the ocean. Such waters have terrible falls, and occasionally grow impure. Sometimes they disappear.—Alas ! poor torrent, what has become of thee ? It is not lost ; it returns to the surface, but only to be lost again ; it is yet far from its goal ; it will have first to be dashed against rocks, scattered abroad, and, as it were, annihilated !

When the writer has brought her torrent to this supreme fall, she is at fault about the simile of the living waters ; she then leaves it, and the torrent becomes a soul again. No image taken from nature could express what this soul is about to suffer. Here begins a strange drama, where it seems no one before had dared to venture—that of mystic death. We certainly find in earlier books a word here and there upon this dark subject ; but no one yet had reached the same depth in the tomb, that deep pit where the soul is about to be buried.

Madame Guyon indulges in a sort of pleasure, or perseverance, I had almost said eagerness, to grope still lower, to find, beyond all funereal ideas, a more definite death, a death more decidedly dead.

There are many things in it, that we should never have expected from a woman's hand: passion in its transports forgets reserve. This soul, that is destined to perish, must first be divested, by her divine lover, of her trappings, the gifts that had ornamented her: he snatches off her garments, that is to say, the virtues in which she had been enveloped.—O shame! She sees herself naked, and knows not where to hide! This is not yet enough; her beauty is taken away. O horror! She sees she is ugly. Frightened and wandering, she runs and becomes loathsome. The faster she runs towards God, "the more she is soiled by the dirty paths she must travel in." Poor, naked, ugly, and deformed, she loses a taste for every thing, understanding, memory, and will; lastly, she loses together with her will a something or other "that is her favourite," and would be a substitute for all (the idea that she is the child of God). This is properly the death at which she must arrive at last. Let nobody, neither the director nor any other, attempt to relieve her. She must die, and be put in the ground; be trodden under foot and walked upon, become foul and rotten, and suffer the stench of corruption, until rottenness becoming dust and ashes, hardly any thing may remain to testify that the soul ever existed.

What was the soul, if it still thinks, must apparently think that all it can now do is, to remain motionless in the bosom of the earth. Now, however, it begins to feel something surprising! Has the sun darted a ray through a crack in the tomb? perhaps only for one moment? No: the effect is durable, the dead soul revives, recovers some strength, a sort of life. But this is no longer her own life, it is *life in God*. She has no longer any thing of her own, neither will nor desire. What has she to do to possess what she loves? Nothing, nothing, eternally nothing. But can she have any defects in this state? Doubtless she has; she knows them, but does nothing to get

rid of them\*: to be able to do so, she would have to become as before, "thoughtful about herself." These are little mists which she must allow to disappear gradually. The soul has now God for soul; he is now become her principle of life, *he is one and identical* with her.

"In this state nothing extraordinary happens, no visions, revelations, ecstasies, nor transports. All such things do not belong to this system, which is simple, pure, and naked, seeing nothing but in God, *as God sees himself*, and by his eyes."

Thus, after many immoral and dangerous things, the soul ends in a singular purity, which few mystics have even approached. A gentle new birth, without either visions or ecstasies, and a sight divinely pure and serene, is the lot of that soul, which, has passed through all the various shadows of death.

If we listen to Madame Guyon, our life, after having been crushed, soiled, and destroyed, will revive in God. He who has passed through all the horror of the sepulchre, whose living body has become a corpse, which has held communion with worms, and from rottenness has become ashes and clay—even he will resume his life, and again bloom in the sun.

What can be less credible, or less conformable to nature? She deceives herself and us by equivocal terms. The life she promises us after this death is not our own; our personality extinguished, effaced, and annihilated, will be succeeded by another, infinite and perfect, I allow; but still not ours.

I had not yet read the *Torrents* when all this was, for the first time, represented to my mind. I was ascending St. Gothard, and had advanced to meet the violent Reuss that rushes madly down the mountain in its headlong course. My imagination conjured up, in spite of myself, the terrible strugglings with which it labours to force its way through rocks that would hem it in and bar its progress. I was frightened at its falls and the efforts it seemed to make, like a poor soul on the rack, to fly from itself, and hide where it might be seen no more. It writhes at the Devil's Bridge, and, in the midst of its agony,

\* Madame Guyon's *Torrents* (Opusc. Cologne, 1701), p. 291.

hurled from an immense height to the bottom of the abyss, it ceases for a moment to be a river: it becomes a tempest between heaven and earth, an icy vapour, a horrible frosty blast, that fills the dark valley with an infernal mist. Mount higher, and higher still. You traverse a cavern, and pass a hollow rock. Lo! the uproar ceases; this grand battle of the elements is over. Peace and silence reign. And life?—is it renewed? Do you find a new-birth after this death-struggle? The meadow is blighted, the flowers are gone, and the very grass is scarce and poor. Nothing in nature stirs, not a bird in the air, not an insect on the earth. You see the sun again, it is true, but void of rays and heat.

## CHAPTER VIII.

FENELON AS DIRECTOR.—HIS QUIETISM.—*MAXIMS OF SAINTS*, 1697.—  
FENELON AND MADAME DE LA MAISONFORT.

MADAME GUYON was not apparently the extravagant and chimerical person that her enemies pretend, since, on her arrival at Paris from Savoy, she managed to captivate and secure, at her first onset, the man, of all others, the most capable of giving a relish to her doctrines—a man of genius, who, moreover, had an infinite fund of sagacity and address, and who, independently of all these merits, possessed what had dispensed, if necessary, with every other qualification, being, at that time, the director the most in vogue.

This new Chantal required a St. François de Sales; she found one in Fenelon, who was less serene and innocent, it is true, and less refulgent with boyhood and seraphic grace, but eminently noble and shrewd, subtle, eloquent, close, very devout, and very intriguing.\*

She laid her hands upon him, seized and carried him by an easy assault. This great genius, whose mind was stored with every variety and every contradiction, would probably have continued to waver, had it not been for this powerful impulse that forced him all on one side. Till then he had wandered between different opinions, and opposite parties and communities, so that every one claimed him as his own, and thought to possess him. Though assiduous in courting Bossuet, whose disciple he said he was, never leaving his side in his retirement at Meaux, he was not less friendly to the Jesuits, and, between the two, he still held fast to Saint-Sulpice. In his theology, at

\* See the learned Tabaraud, (Supplement to Bausset's History, 1832,) and the very shrewd and judicious appreciation of two excellent critics, Mr. Monty (On the Duke of Burgundy), and Mr. Thomas (A Province in the Reign of Louis XIV.).

one time inclining towards Grace, at another towards Free-will, imbued with the oldest mystics, and full of the presentiments of the eighteenth century, he seems to have had, beneath his faith, some obscure corners of scepticism which he was unwilling to fathom. All these divers elements, without being able to combine, were harmonised in his outward actions, under the graceful influence of the most elegant genius that was ever met with. Being both a Grecian and a Christian, he reminds us at the same time of the fathers, philosophers, and romancers of the Alexandrian period; and sometimes our sophist turns prophet, and, in his sermon, soars on the wings of Isaiah.

Every thing inclines us to believe, for all that, that the astonishing writer was the least part of Fenelon — he was superlatively the *Director*. Who can say by what enchantment he bewitched souls, and filled them with transport? We perceive traces of it in the infinite charms of his correspondence, disfigured and adulterated as it is\*; no other has been more cruelly pruned, purged, and designedly obscured. Yet in these fragments and scattered remains, seduction is still omnipotent: besides a nobleness of manner, and an animated and refined turn of thought, in which the man of power is very perceptible under the robe of the apostle, there is also what is particularly his own, a feminine delicacy that by no means excludes strength, and even in his subtilty an indescrivable tenderness that touches the heart. When a youth, and before he was tutor to the Duke of Burgundy, he had, for a long time, directed the *newly converted*. There he had had the opportunity of well studying woman's character, and of acquiring that perfect knowledge of the female heart, in which he was unrivalled.

The impassioned interest they took in his fortune, the tears of his little flock, the Duchesses of Chevreuse, Beauvilliers, and others, when he missed the archbishopric of Paris, their constant fidelity to this well-beloved guide during his exile at Cambrai, which ended only with his death — all this fills up the void of the lost letters, and conveys a strange idea of this

\* A bishop, at that time an inspector of the University, boasted before me (and several other persons, who will be witnesses if necessary) that he had burned some of Fenelon's letters.

all-powerful magician, whose invincible magic defied every attack.

To introduce spirituality so refined and so exalted, and such a pretension to supreme perfection into that world of outward propriety and ceremonial at Versailles, and this, at the end of a reign in which every thing seemed rigidly frozen — was, indeed, a rash undertaking. There was no question here of abandoning one's self, like Madame Guyon in her retreat among the Alps, to the torrents of divine love. It was necessary to have the appearance of common sense, and the forms of reason even in the madness of love ; it was expedient, as the ancient comic writer says "*to run mad with rule and measure.*" This is what Fenelon attempted to do in the *Maxims of Saints*. The condemnation of Molinos, and the imprisonment of Madame Guyon at Vincennes, were a sufficient lesson : he declared himself, but with prudence, and though perfectly decided, maintained an outward show of weak indecision.

Nevertheless, with all his skill, cunning, and prevarication, if he differs from the absolute Quietists whom he affects to condemn, it is less in any fundamental part of doctrine, than the degree in which he admits that doctrine. He thinks he goes far enough in saying, that the state of quiet in which the soul loses its activity is not a *perpetually*, but an *habitually* passive state. But in acknowledging inaction to be both superior to action and a state of perfection, does he not make us wish that the inaction might be perpetual?

The soul *habitually* passive, according to him, is concentrated above, leaving beneath her the inferior part, whose acts are those of an entirely *blind* and involuntary commotion. *These acts being always supposed to be voluntary*, he avows that the superior part still remains responsible for them. Will they then be governed by it? By no means ; it is absorbed in its sublime quietude. What, then, is to interfere in its place? What is to keep order in this lower sphere, where the soul no longer descends? He tells us plainly — *it is the director.\**

His modification of Molinos in theory is less important than

\* *Maxims of Saints*, article 14., and 8. 20. 39. 45.



it seems to be. The speculative part, with which Bossuet is so much occupied, is not the most essential in a point where practice is so directly interested. What is really serious is, that Fenelon, as well as Molinos, after having traced out a great plan of regulations, has not enough of these rules; he has to call in, at every moment, the assistance of the director. He establishes a system; but this system cannot work alone; it wants the hand of man. This inert theory requires, every moment, the supplement of an especial consultation, and an empirical expedient. The director is a sort of supplementary soul for the soul, who, whilst this last is sleeping in its sublime sphere, is leading and regulating every thing for it in this miserable world below, which is, nevertheless, after all, that of reality.

Man, then, and eternally man! this is what you find at the bottom of their doctrines in sifting and compressing them; this is the *ultima ratio* of their systems: such is their theory, and such their life also.

I leave these two illustrious adversaries, Fenelon and Bossuet, to dispute about ideas. I prefer to observe their practice. There, I see that the doctrine has but a little, and man a very great part. Whether Quietists or Anti-quietists, they do not differ much in their method of enveloping the soul, and lulling the will to sleep.

During this contention of theories, or rather before it began, there was a personal one, very curious to witness. The stake in this game, if I may use the expression, the spiritual prize that both sides disputed, was a woman, a charming soul, full of transport and youth, of an imprudent vivacity, and ingenuous loyalty.\* She was a niece of Madame Guyon, a young lady whom they called Madame de la Maisonfort, for she was a canoness. This noble, but poor young lady, ill-treated by her father and stepmother, had fallen into the cold political hands of Madame de Maintenon. Either for the vanity of founding,

\* A singular destiny was that of this young lady, whose tears one day are wiped away by Racine (she was playing Elise in Esther), and whom Fenelon and Bossuet have caused to weep so often! See Mr. de Noaille's Saint-Cyr, p. 113. (1843).

or in order to amuse an old king rather difficult to entertain, she was then establishing Saint-Cyr, for the daughters of noble families. She knew the king was ever *sensible* to women, and consequently let him see only old ones or children. The boarders of Saint-Cyr, who in the innocency of their sports gladdened the eyes of the old man, brought to his mind a former age, and offered him a mild and innocent opportunity for paternal gallantry.

Madame de Maintenon, who, as is well known, owed her singular fortune to a certain decent harmony of middling qualities, looked out for an eminently middling person, if one may use the expression, to superintend this establishment. She could not do better than to seek him among the Sulpicians and Lazarists. Godet, the Sulpician, whom she took as director both of Saint-Cyr and herself, was a man of merit, though a downright pedant; at least Saint Simon, his admirer, gives us this sort of definition of him. Madame de Maintenon saw in him the blunt matter-of-fact priest, who might insure her against every sort of eccentricity. With such a man as that, one would have nothing to fear: having to choose between the two men of genius who influenced Saint-Cyr\*, Racine the Jansenist, and Fenelon the Quietist, she preferred Godet.

Those who are ignorant of its history would have only to look at the mansion of Saint-Cyr, to discern in it at once the real abode of *ennui*. The soul of the foundress, the domineering spirit of the governess, is every where perceptible. The very look of the place makes one yawn. It would be something, if this building had but a sorrowful character; even sadness may entertain the soul. No, it is not sad, yet it is not the more cheerful on that account; there is nothing to be said against it, the character and the style being equally null; there is nothing one can even blame\*. Of what age is the chapel? Neither Gothic nor the *renaissance*, nor is it even the Jesuit style. Perhaps, then, there is something of the Jansenist austerity? It is by no means austere. What is it then? Nothing. But

\* "Either Racine, in speaking to you of Jansenism, would have led you into it, or Mr. de Cambrai," &c. See the Letters of Madame de Maintenon, vol. ii. p. 190. (1757).

this nothing causes an overwhelming *ennui*, such as one would never find elsewhere.

After the first short half-devout and half-worldly period, that of the representations of *Athalie* and *Esther*, which the young ladies had played too well, the school being reformed, became a sort of convent. Instead of Racine, it was the Abbé Pellegin and Madame de Maintenon who wrote pieces for Saint-Cyr\*; and the governesses were required to be nuns. This was a great change; it displeased Louis XIV. himself†, and ran the risk of compromising the new establishment. Madame de Maintenon seems to have been aware of this, and she looked out for a *foundation-stone to her edifice*, a living one—alas! a woman full of grace and life!—It was poor Maisonfort, whom they decided to veil, immure, and seal up for ever in the foundations of Saint-Cyr.

But she whose will was law in every thing, she was unable to do this. Lively and independent as was La Maisonfort, all the kings and queens in the world would have been unsuccessful. The heart alone, skilfully touched, was able to induce her to take the desired step. Madame de Maintenon, who desired it extremely, made such vigorous efforts, that they surprise us when we read her letters. That very reserved person throws her character aside in this business: she becomes confiding, in order to be confided in, and does not fear to avow to the young girl, whom she wishes to make disgusted with this life, that she herself, in the highest station in the world, “is dying of sadness and *ennui*.”

What proved to be much more efficacious, was their employing against her a new director, the seducing, charming, irresistible, Abbé de Fenelon. He was then on very good terms with Madame de Maintenon; dining every Sunday with her in the apartments of the Duchesses de Beauvilliers and de Chevreuse, where, all alone, without servants, they served themselves, that they might not be overheard. The inclination

\* Unpublished *Proverbs* of Madame de Maintenon, 1829. See also her *Conversations* (1828), and her *Spirit of the Institution of the Girls of Saint Louis* (1808).

† Mr. de Noailles, *Saint-Cyr*, p. 131.

La Maisonfort felt for this singular man was great, and authority ordered her to follow this inclination: "See the Abbé de Fenelon," Madame de Maintenon would write to her, "and accustom yourself to live with him." \*

Kind order! she followed it but too well: — sweet custom! — With such a man, who animated every thing by his personal charm, who simplified and facilitated the most arduous things, she did not walk, but fly, between heaven and earth, into the tepid regions of divine love. So much seduction, sanctity, and liberty at once — it was too much for her poor heart!

St. Simon tells us by what method of espionage and treason Godet proved the presence of Quietism in Saint-Cyr. There was no need of so much cunning. La Maisonfort was so pure as to be imprudent. In the happiness of this new spirituality, into which she entered with her whole soul, she said much more than was required of her.

Fenelon, suspected as he had then become, was still left with her, till she had made the important step. They waited till, under his influence, and in spite of her own protestations and tears, she had taken the veil, and heard the fatal grate shut behind her.

Two meetings were held at Saint-Cyr, to decide on the destiny of the victim. Godet, supported by the Lazarists, Thiberge, and Brisacier, decided she should be a nun, and Fenelon, who was a member of this fine council, made no opposition. She herself has informed us, that, during the deliberation, "she retired before the holy sacrament in a strange agony; that she thought she should have died of grief, and that she passed the whole of the night in a flood of tears."

The deliberation was merely a matter of form; Madame de Maintenon was resolved; and obey they must. Nobody at that time was more at her command than Fenelon. It was then the decisive crisis of Quietism. The question was no less than to know whether its doctor, writer, and prophet, unpalatable as he was to the king, who, however, did not yet thoroughly know him, would be able to acquire, before his doctrine burst

\* A letter quoted by Phélippeaux in his Relation of Quietism, vol. i. p. 43.

forth, that position of a great prelate in the church, to which all his supporters were hurrying him. Hence sprung his unlimited devotedness to Madame de Maintenon, and the sacrifice of poor Maisonfort to her omnipotent will. Fenelon, who knew perfectly well how little she was inclined to this vocation, sacrificed her, certainly not to his personal interests, but for the advancement of his doctrines and the aggrandizement of his own party.

As soon as she had taken the veil, and was immured for ever, he became more and more distant; for she was frankness itself, and by her imprudence did harm to his doctrine, which was already sharply attacked. He did not need so compromising an alliance, but what he wanted was political support. In his last extremity he addressed himself to the Jesuits, and took one of them for his confessor; for they had taken the precaution to have some on both sides.

To fall back from Fenelon to Godet, and undergo his blunt and harsh direction, was more than the new nun could support. One day, when he came to her with the little decrees and petty regulations which he had composed with Madame de Maintenon, La Maisonfort could contain herself no longer, but spoke out, before him and the all-powerful foundress, all the contempt she felt for them. A short time after, a letter with the king's seal expelled her unfeelingly from Saint-Cyr.

She had defended herself too successfully against such persons as Godet, Brisacier, and others of the hostile party. Though abandoned by Fenelon, she endeavoured to remain faithful to his doctrines, and was determined to keep his books. They were obliged to invoke the most powerful man of the time, Bossuet, in order to bring the rebel to reason. But she would not receive even his advice, till after she had asked Fenelon whether she might do so. He replies to this last mark of confidence, I regret to say, by a dull disagreeable letter\*, in which are shown but too plainly his jealousy, and the regret he feels in seeing one, whom he had abandoned, pass under the control of another.

\* The whole of this letter is to be found in *Phélippeaux*, vol. 1. p. 161. "It is not a proof of being well, when you require so many physicians."

## CHAPTER IX.

\*BOSSUET AS DIRECTOR. — BOSSUET AND SISTER CORNUAU. — HIS LOYALTY AND IMPRUDENCE. — HE IS PRACTICALLY A QUIETIST. — DEVOUT DIRECTION INCLINES TO QUIETISM. — A MORAL PARALYSIS.

NOTHING throws more light upon the real character of the *direction* than the correspondence of the *worthiest and most loyal of directors* — I mean Bossuet. Experience is decisive ; if here, too, the results are bad, we must blame the method and the system, but by no means the man.

The greatness of his genius, and the nobleness of his character would naturally remove Bossuet far from the petty passions of the vulgar herd of directors, their meanness, jealousy, and vexatious tyranny. We may believe what one of his own penitents says of him : — “ Without disapproving,” says she, “ of the directors who interfere even in the slightest thoughts and affections, *he did not relish this practice* towards those souls which loved God and had made some progress in spiritual life.” \*

His correspondence is praiseworthy, noble, and serious. You will not find in it the too loving tenderness of Saint François de Sales, and still less the refinement and impassioned subtleties of Fenelon. Bossuet's letters, though less austere, resemble those of Saint-Cyran by their seriousness. They often contain a grandeur of style little suited to the humble and ordinary person to whom they are generally addressed, but very advantageous in keeping her at a distance, and preventing too close an intimacy even in the most unreserved private conversation.

If this correspondence has reached us in a more complete

\* Bossuet's Works, Notice of Sister Cornuau, vol. xi. p. 300. (ed. Lefebvre, 1836).

form than that of Fenelon, we are indebted for it (at least for the most curious part of it) to the veneration which one of Bossuet's penitents, the good Widow Cornuau, entertained for his memory. That worthy person, in transmitting these letters to us, has religiously left in them a number of details, humiliating enough for herself. She has forgotten her own vanity, and thought only of the glory of her spiritual father. In this, she has been very happily guided by her attachment for him; perhaps, indeed, she has done more for him than any panegyrist. These noble letters written in such profound secrecy, and never intended to see daylight, are worthy of being exhibited to the public.

This good widow tells us, that when she had the happiness of going to see him in his retirement at Meaux, he received her occasionally "in a small, very cold, and smoky room." This is, according to all appearances, the small summer-house, which is shown even in our time, at the end of the garden, on the old rampart of the city, which forms the terrace of the episcopal palace. The cabinet is on the ground-floor, and above it, in a small loft, slept the valet, who awoke Bossuet early every morning. A dark narrow alley of yews and holly leads to this dull apartment: these are old dwarf stunted trees, which have entwined their knotty branches and their dark prickly leaves. Dreams of the past dwell for ever here; here you may still find all the difficulties of those grand polemical questions, now so remote from us, the disputes of Jurieu and Claude, with the stately history of the Variations, and the deadly battle of Quietism, envenomed by betrayed friendship. The tower of the cathedral, with its mild majestic mien, hovers above the French-fashioned, grave-looking garden; but it is neither seen from the dark little alley, nor from the dull cabinet: a place confined, cold, and of a disagreeable aspect, which in spite of noble reminiscences, disheartens us by its vulgarity, and reminds us that this fine genius, the best priest of his age, was still a priest.

There was scarcely any other point by which this domineering spirit could be touched, than docility and obedience. The good Cornuau exercised these qualities in a degree he

could hardly have expected. She gives much, and we see that she hides still more, for fear of displeasing him. She set all her wits to work, to follow, as far as her natural mediocrity permitted her, the tastes and ideas of this great man. He had a genius for government; and she had it also in miniature. She took upon herself the business of the community with which she lived, and at the same time transacted that of her own family. She waited in this manner fifteen years before she was allowed to become a nun. She at last obtained this favour, and had herself called the Sister of Saint-Bénigne, thus assuming, rather boldly perhaps, Bossuet's own name. These real cares, in which the prudent director kept her a long time, had an excellent effect upon her, in diverting and pruning her imagination. She was of an impassioned, honest, but rather ordinary disposition; and, unfortunately for her, she had enough good sense to confess to herself what she was. She knows, and she tells herself, that she is only a commoner of the lower order; that she has neither birth, wit, grace, nor connection; that she has not even seen Versailles! What chance would she have of gaining his favour in a struggle against the other spiritual daughters, those fine ladies, ever brilliant even in their penitence and voluntary abasement?

It seems that she had hoped at first to have her revenge in some other way, and to rise above these worldly ladies by the path of mysticism. She took it into her head one day to have visions: she wrote one, of a very paltry imagination, which Bossuet did not encourage. What could she do? Nature had denied her wings; she saw plainly that most certainly she would not be able to fly. At any rate, she had no pride; she did not try to conceal the sad condition of her heart; and this humiliating confession escapes her: "I am bursting with jealousy."

What affects us the most is, that after having made the confession, this poor creature, so very gentle, and so very good, sacrificed her own feelings, and became nurse to her who was the object of her jealousy, and then attacked by a dreadful malady. She accompanied her to Paris, shut herself up with her, took care of her, and at last loved her; for the very



reason, perhaps, which just before had produced quite the contrary effect — because she was loved by Bossuet.

Sister Cornuau is evidently mistaken in her jealousy; she herself is the person preferred; we see it now by comparing the different correspondence. For her are reserved all his paternal indulgence; for her alone he seems at times to be affected, as much as his ordinary gravity permits. This man, so occupied, finds time to write her nearly two hundred letters; and he is certainly much more firm and austere with the fine lady of whom she is jealous. He becomes short and almost harsh towards the latter, when the business is to answer the rather difficult confidential questions which she perseveres in putting to him. He postpones his answer to an indefinite period (“to my entire leisure”); and till that time, he forbids her to write upon such subjects, otherwise “he will burn her letters without even reading them (24th November, 1691).” He says, somewhere else, very nobly, concerning these delicate things which may trouble the imagination, “that it was necessary, when one was obliged to speak of, and listen to sufferings of this sort, *to be standing with only the point of the foot upon the earth.*” This perfect honesty, which would never understand any thing in a bad sense, makes him sometimes forget the existence of evil more than he ought, and renders him rather incautious. Confident also in his age, then very mature, he occasionally allows himself outbursts of mystic love, that were indiscreet before so impassioned a witness as Sister Cornuau. In presence of this simple, submissive, and in every respect inferior person, he considers himself to be alone; and giving free course to the vivacious instinct of poetry that animated him even in his old days, he does not hesitate to make use of the mysterious language of the Song of Solomon. Sometimes it is in order to calm his penitent, and strengthen her chastity, that he employs this ardent language. I dare not copy the letter (innocent \*, certainly, but so very imprudent)

\* Others have given themselves the cheap pleasure to refute all that I have not said, and to prove that Bossuet is an honest man, &c.—Well! who said the contrary?—at the same time, as they do not well know what Quietism is (any more than Grace and Free-will), in order to justify Bossuet for

which he writes from his country-house at Germigny (July 10. 1692), and in which he explains the meaning of the Bride's words, "Support me with flowers, because I languish for love." This potion, which is to cure passion by a stronger one, is marvellously calculated to double the evil. What surprises us much more than this imprudence is, that we find frequently in the intimate correspondence of this great adversary of Quietism, the greater part of the sentiments and practical maxims for which the Quietists were reproached. He takes pleasure in developing their favourite text, *Expectans, expectavi*. "The Bride ought not to hurry; she must wait in expectation of what the Bridegroom will do; if, during the expectation, he caresses the soul, and inclines it to caress him, she must yield her heart. The means of the union is the union itself. All the correspondence of the Bride consists in letting the Bridegroom act."

"Jesus is admirable in the chaste embraces with which he

his Quietism, they quote an eminently Quietist text, "*Make no effort, either of head, or even of heart, to unite yourself to your Bridegroom*" (October 26. 1694). What I have said, and what I repeat, is, that the most loyal director in the world is still very dangerous; that his language, dictated doubtless by a pure intention, is not less likely to trouble the flesh. Even when he blames and forbids, he does so precisely in the very terms that are the most likely to awaken what he forbids. At such times, I do not like to look upon a great man, an old man, one who has a claim to our respect for other reasons. If, however, they absolutely want proofs, let them read (January 17. 1692), "When the tender wound of love," &c. — (June 4. 1695), "Dare every thing with the celestial Bridegroom — seize hold of him — I permit you the most violent transports." — (July 3. 1695), "Jesus wishes you to be with him; he wishes to enjoy, and that you may enjoy with him: his holy flesh is the means of this union and this chaste enjoyment," &c. — (May 14. 1695), "It is in the holy sacrament that we enjoy *virginally*, the body of the Bridegroom, and that he appropriates ours," &c. — (June 1. 1696), "Embrace, at liberty, this dear little brother, who, every day, longs to be united to you," &c.

If you want anything more personal, see the really weak manner in which he repels the tender advances of that noble nun whose sensual confidences he had declined: — "*Indeed I would not excite these tendernesses of the heart in a direct manner; but when they come of themselves, or in consequence of other reasons, &c., I am not insensible, thank God, to a certain correspondence of sentiments, or of tastes. But, though I feel strongly these correspondences,*" &c. "*All you feel concerning me is, in truth, nothing to me in that matter, and you must not fear to reveal it to me,*" &c. It seems that the illustrious penitent was frightened at his sentiments, and wished to take a less beloved director: — "*I forbid you to adhere to the temptation of quitting, or to believe that I am either fatigued or wearied by your conduct.*" — Dec. 1691.

honours his Bride and makes her fruitful ; all the virtues are the fruits of his chaste embraces " (February 28. 1693). — " A change of life must follow ; *but without the soul even thinking of changing itself.*"

This thoroughly Quietist letter is dated May 30. (1696) ; and eight days after \* — sad inconsistency ! — he writes these unfeeling words about Madame Guyon : " They appear to me resolved to shut her up far away in some good castle," &c.

How is it he does not perceive that in practical questions, far more important than theory, he differs in nothing from those whom he treats so badly ? The direction, in Bossuet, as in his adversaries, is the development of the inert and passive part of our nature, *expectans, expectavi.*

For me it is a strange sight to see them all, even in the midst of the middle age, crying out against the mystics, and then falling into mysticism themselves. The declivity must, indeed, be rapid and insurmountable.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the profound Rusbrock and the great Gerson imitate precisely those they blame ; and in the seventeenth, the Quietists Bona, Fenelon, even Lacombe, Madame Guyon's director, speak severely and harshly of the absolute Quietists : they all point out the abyss, and all fall into it themselves.

No matter who the persons may be, there is a logical fatality. The man who, by his character and genius is the farthest removed from passive measures, he who in his writings condemns them the most strongly, even Bossuet, in practice tends towards them, like the others.

What signifies their writing against the theory of Quietism ? Quietism is much more a method than a system : a method of drowsiness and indolence which we ever meet with, in one shape or other, in religious direction. It is useless to recommend activity, like Bossuet, or to permit it, like Fenelon, if, preventing every active exercise of the soul, and holding it, as it were, in leading-strings, you deprive it of the habit, taste, and power of acting.

\* Bossuet's Works, vol. xi. p. 380.† and vol. xii. p. 53. (ed. 1836).

Is it not then an illusion, Bossuet ? if the soul still seems to act, when this activity is no longer its own, but yours. You show me a person who moves and walks ; but I see well, that this appearance of motion proceeds from your influence over that person, you yourself being, as it were, the principle of action, the cause and reason of living, walking, and moving.

There is always the same sum of action in the total ; only, in this dangerous affinity between the director and the person directed, all the action is on the side of the former ; he alone remains an active force, a will, a person ; he who is directed losing gradually all that constitutes his personality, becomes—what ?—a machine.

When Pascal, in his proud contempt for reason, engages us *to become stupid* \*, and bend within us what he calls the *automaton* and *machine*, he does not see that it will only be an *exchange* of reason ; our reason having herself put on the bit and bridle, that of another man will mount, ride, and guide it at his will, as he would a horse.

If the automaton should still possess some motion, how will they lead it ? According to the *probable* opinion, for the *probabilism* of the Jesuits reigned in the first half of the century. Later, when its motion ceased, the paralysed age learned from the Quietists that immobility is perfection itself.

The decay and impotency which characterised the latter years of Louis XIV. are rather veiled by a remnant of literary splendour ; they are, nevertheless, deeply seated. This was the natural consequence, not only of great efforts which produce exhaustion, but also of the theories of abnegation, impersonality, and systematic nullity, which had always gained ground in this century. By dint of continually repeating that one cannot walk well without being supported by another, a generation arose that no longer walked, at all, but boasted of having forgotten what motion was, and gloried in it. Madame Guyon, in speaking of herself, expresses forcibly, in a letter to Bossuet, what was then the general condition : “ You say, Monseigneur, there

\* Montaigne says also, *grow stupid* ; but not for the profit of authority : he has another sense, and a different intention. See Pascal, ed. Faugère, vol. ii. p. 168.

are only four or five persons who are in this difficulty of acting for themselves ; but I tell you there are more than a hundred thousand. When you told me to ask and desire, I found myself like a paralytic who is told to walk because *he has legs* : the efforts he makes for that purpose serve only to make him aware of his inability. We say, in common parlance, *every man who has legs ought to walk* : I believe it, and I know it ; however, I have legs, but I feel plainly that I cannot make use of them." \*

\* A letter of the 10th of February, 1694, Bossuet's Works, vol. xii. p. 14. (ed. 1836). Compare the very sad confessions of the sister of Mans, *ibid.*, vol. xi. p. 558., March 30. 1695, and those of Fenelon himself on the 8th of November, 1700, vol. i. p. 572. (ed. Didot. 1838).

## CHAPTER X.

MOLINOS' \* *GUIDE*;—THE PART PLAYED IN IT BY THE DIRECTOR;—HYPOCRITICAL AUSTERITY;—IMMORAL DOCTRINE.—MOLINOS APPROVED OF AT ROME, 1675.—MOLINOS CONDEMNED AT ROME, 1687.—HIS MANNERS CONFORMABLE TO HIS DOCTRINE.—SPANISH MOLINOSISTS.—MOTHER AGUEDA.

THE greatest danger for the poor paralytic, who can no longer move by himself, is, not that he may remain inactive, but that he may become the sport of the active influence of others. The theories which speak the most of immobility are not always disinterested. Be on your guard, and take care.

Molinos' book, with its artful and premeditated composition, has a character entirely its own, which distinguishes it from the natural and inspired writings of the great mystics. The latter, such as Sta. Theresa, often recommend obedience and entire submission to the director, and dissuade from self-confidence. They thus give themselves a guide, but in their enthusiastic efforts they hurry their guide away with them: they think they follow him, but they lead him. The director has nothing else to do with them but to sanction their inspiration.†

\* Miguel Molinos, a Spanish theologian, born in 1627, in the diocese of Zaragoza, settled in Rome, where he acquired a great reputation for piety and skill in directing consciences. In 1675 he published, with the approbation of five doctors, his work entitled "The Spiritual Guide;" in which he professed to direct souls in the way of perfection. He died in prison in 1696. His followers are here called *Molinosists*.—TRANSL.

† Madame Guyon herself, who developed more than any mystic the theory of death, is, as it were, dead in language, though always lively in heart. Even in that ocean, "where the poor torrent is lost," it preserves its own life and the freshness of its streams; so great is its force, so powerful its impetuosity, and so high the mountains whence it falls! The Rhone pierces through all its lake that enormous mass of unfathomable waters, and is still the Rhone at its exit. Occasionally, and at long intervals, we hear the director named. But who directs such an impetuosity? Poor Father la Combe, as we well know, cannot guide his own bark; the torrent in which he was hurried along carried him away—he became mad.

The originality of Molinos' book is quite the contrary. There, internal activity has actually no longer any existence ; no action but what is occasioned by an exterior impulse. *The director* is the pivot of the whole book ; he appears every moment, and even when he disappears, we perceive he is close at hand. He is *the guide*, or rather the support, without which the powerless soul could not move a step. He is the ever-present physician, who decides whether the sick patient may taste this or that. Sick ? Yes ; and seriously ill ; since it is necessary that another should, every moment, think, feel, and act for her ; in a word, live in her place.

As for the soul, can we say it lives ? Is this not rather actual death ? The great mystics sought for death, and could not find it : the living activity remained even in the sepulchre. To die, singly, in God, to die with one's own will and energy, this is not dying completely. But slothfully to allow your soul to enter the mad vortex of another soul, and suffer, half-asleep, the strange transformation in which your personality is absorbed in his ; this is, indeed, real moral death ; we need not look for any other.

"To act, is the deed of the novice ; to suffer, is immediate gain ; to die, is perfection. Let us go forward in darkness, and we shall go well ; the horse that goes round blind-folded grinds corn so much the better. Let us neither think nor read. A *practical* master will tell us, better than any book, what we must do at the very moment. It is a great security to have an experienced guide to govern and direct us, according to his actual intelligence, and prevent our being deceived by the demon or our own senses." \*

Molinos, in leading us gently by this road, seems to me to know very well whither he is conducting us. I judge so by the infinite precautions he takes to re-assure us ; by his crying up every where humility, austerities, excessive scrupulousness, and prudence carried to a ridiculous extreme. The saints are not so wise. In a very humble preface, he believes that this little book, devoid of ornament and style, and without a protector,

\* Molinos, *Guida Spirituale* (Venetia, 1685), pp. 86. 161. and passim, Lat. transl. (Lipsiæ, 1687).

cannot have any success: "he will, no doubt, be criticised; every body will find him insipid." In the last page, his humility is still greater, he *lays his work prostrate*, and submits it to the correction of the Holy Roman Church.\*†

He gives us to understand, that the real director directs without any inclination for the task: "He is a man who would gladly dispense with the care of souls, who sighs and pants for solitude. He is, especially, very far from wishing to get the direction of women, they being, generally, too little prepared. He must take especial care not to call his penitent *his daughter*; the word is too tender, and God is jealous of it. Self-love united with passion, that hydra-headed monster, sometimes assumes the form of gratitude and filial affection for the confessor. He must not visit his penitents at their homes, not even in cases of sickness, *unless he be called*."†

This is, indeed, an astounding severity: these are excessive precautions, unheard of before the days of Molinos! What holy man have we here? It is true, if the director ought not to go of his own accord to visit the patient, *he may, if she call him*. And *I* say, she will call him. With such a direction, is she not always ill, embarrassed, fearful, and too *infirm* to do any thing of herself? she will wish to have him every hour. Every impulse that is not from him might possibly proceed from the devil; even the pang of remorse, that she occasionally feels within her, may be occasioned by the devil's agency.†

As soon as he is with her, on the contrary, how tranquil she becomes! How he comforts her with one word! How easily he resolves all her scruples! She is well rewarded for having waited and obeyed, and being ever ready to obey. She now feels that obedience is better than any virtue.

Well! let her only be discreet, and she will be led still further. "She must not, when she sins, be uneasy about it; for should

\* This celebrated book, Molinos' "Guide," is not very original. We find little in it that is not better said in the other Quietists. Read, however, his enthusiastic eulogy on *nullity* or *nothingness*; a few passages of which have been translated by Bossuet in his third book of "Instruction sur les Etats d'Oraison"

† The *Guide*, vol. ii. ch. 6.

† Ibid. vol. ii. ch. 17.



she be grieved at it, it would be a sign that she still possessed a leaven of pride. It is the devil, who, to hinder us in our spiritual path, makes us busy with our backslidings. Would it not be foolish for him who runs to stop when he falls, and weep like a child, instead of pursuing his course? These falls have the excellent effect of preserving us from pride, which is the greatest fall of all. God makes virtues of our vices, and these very vices, by which the devil thought to cast us into the pit, become a ladder to mount to heaven.”\*

“This doctrine was well received. Molinos had had the tact to publish, at the same time, another book, that might serve as a passport to this, a treatise on *Daily Communion*, directed against the Jansenists and Arnaud’s great work. The *Spiritual Guide* was examined with all the favour that Rome could show to the enemy of her enemies. There was scarcely any religious order that did not approve of it. The Roman Inquisition gave it three approbations by three of its members, a Jesuit, a Carmelite, and the general of the Franciscans. The Spanish Inquisition approved of it twice:—first, by the general examiner of the order of the Capuchins; and, secondly, by a Trinitarian, the Archbishop of Reggio. It was prefaced with an enthusiastic and extravagant eulogy by the Archbishop of Palermo.

The Quietists must have been at that time very strong in Rome, since one of them, Cardinal Bona (Malaval’s protector), was on the point of being made pope.

The tide turned, contrary to every expectation. The great Gallic tempest of 1682, which, for nearly ten years, interrupted the connection between France and the Holy See, and showed how easily one may dispense with Rome, obliged the pope to raise the moral dignity of the pontificate, by acts of severity. The lash fell especially upon the Jesuits and their friends. Innocent XI. pronounced a solemn condemnation upon the casuists, though rather too late, as these people had been crushed twenty years before by Pascal. But Quietism still flourished: the Franciscans and Jesuits had taken it into

\* “Scala per salire al cielo.” — *Guida*, p. 138. lib. ii. ch. 18.

favour; the Dominicans were therefore averse to it. Molinos, in his *Manuel*, had considerably reduced the merits of St. Dominic, and pretended that *St. Thomas, when dying, confessed that he had not, up to that time, written any thing good.* Accordingly, of all the great religious orders, that of the Dominicans was the only one which refused its approbation to Molinos' *Guide*.

The book and its author, examined under this new influence, appeared horribly guilty. The Inquisition of Rome, without taking any notice of the approbations granted twelve years before by their examiners, condemned the *Guide*, together with some propositions not contained in it, but which they extracted from the examination of Molinos, or from his teaching. This one is not the least curious: "God, to humble us, permits, in certain perfect souls (well enlightened and in their lucid state), that the devil should make them commit certain carnal acts. In this case, and in others, which, without the permission of God, would be guilty, there is no sin, because there is no consent. It may happen, that those violent movements, which excite to carnal acts, may take place in two persons, a man and a woman, at the same moment."\*

This case happened to Molinos himself, and much too often. He underwent a public penance, humbled himself for his morals, and did not defend his doctrine: this saved him. The inquisitors, who had formerly approved of him, must have been themselves much embarrassed about this trial. He was treated with leniency, and only imprisoned, whilst two of his disciples, who had only faithfully applied his doctrine, were burned alive without pity. One was a curate of Dijon, the other a priest of Tudela in Navarre.

How can we be surprised that such a theory should have had such results in morals? It would be much more astonishing if it had not. Besides, these immoral results do not proceed exclusively from Molinosism, a doctrine at once imprudent and too evident, and which they would take good care not to profess.

\* Condemned articles, pp. 41, 42., at the head of the Lat. transl. (Lipsiæ, 1687).

They spring naturally from every practical direction that lulls the will, taking from the person this natural guardian, and exposing him thus prostrate to the mercy of him who watches over the sick couch. The tale told more than once by the middle ages, and which casuists have examined so coldly, the violation of the dead, we here meet with again. The person is left as defenceless by the death of the will, as by physical death.

The Archbishop of Palermo, in his Pindaric eulogy of the *Spiritual Guide*, says that this admirable book is most especially suitable to the *direction of nuns*. The advice was understood, and turned to account, especially in Spain. From that saying of Molinos, "That sins, being an occasion of humility, serve as a ladder to mount to heaven," the Molinosists drew this consequence — the more we sin the higher we ascend.

There was among the Carmelites of Lerma a holy woman, Mother Agueda, esteemed as a saint. People went to her from all the neighbouring provinces, to get her to cure the sick. A convent was founded on the spot that had been so fortunate as to give her birth. There, in the church, they adored her portrait placed within the choir; and there she cured those who were brought to her, by applying to them certain miraculous stones which she brought forth, as they said, with pains similar to those of childbirth. This miracle lasted twenty years. At last the report spread that these confinements were but too true, and that she was really delivered. The Inquisition of Logrono having made a visit to the convent, arrested Mother Agueda, and questioned the other nuns, among whom was the young niece of the Saint, Donna Vincenta. The latter confessed, without any prevarication, the commerce that her aunt, herself, and the others had had with the provincial of the Carmelites, the prior of Lerma, and other friars of the first rank. The Saint had been confined five times, and her niece showed the place where the children had been killed and buried, the moment they were born. They found the skeletons.\*

\* When Lewis's "Monk" appeared, in 1796, people little expected to see that terrible novel outdone by a real history. The latter has been found in Llorente's Registers of the Inquisition (vol. iv. of the French transl. 1818, pp. 30—32).

What is not less horrible is, that this young nun, only nine years of age, a dutiful child, immured by her aunt for this strange life, and having no other education, firmly believed that this was really the devout life, perfection, and sanctity, and followed this path in full confidence, upon the faith of her confessors.

The grand doctor of these nuns was the provincial of the Carmelites, Jean de la Vega. He had written the life of the Saint, and arranged her miracles ; and he it was who had had the skill to have her glorified, and her festival observed, though she was still alive. He himself was considered almost a saint by the vulgar. The monks said every where that, since the blessed Jean de la Croix, Spain had not seen a man so austere and penitent. According to their custom of designating illustrious doctors by a titular name (such as Angelic, Seraphic, &c.), he was called the Ecstatic. Being much stronger than the saint, he resisted the torture, whereas she died in it : he confessed nothing, except that he had received the money for eleven thousand eight hundred masses that he had not said ; and he got off with being banished to the convent of Duruelo.

## CHAPTER XI.

NO MORE SYSTEMS ; — AN EMBLEM. — BLOOD. — SEX. — THE IMMACULATE WOMAN. — THE SACRED HEART. — MARIE ALACOQUE. — DOUBLE MEANING OF SACRED HEART. — THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY IS THE AGE OF DOUBLE MEANING. — CHIMERICAL POLICY OF THE JESUITS. — FATHER COLOMBIERE AND MARIE ALACOQUE, 1675. — ENGLAND ; — PAPIST CONSPIRACY. — FIRST ALTAR OF THE SACRED HEART, 1685. — RUIN OF THE GALLICANS, 1693 ; — OF THE QUIETISTS, 1698 ; — OF PORT ROYAL, 1709. — THEOLOGY ANNIHILATED IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. — MATERIALITY OF THE SACRED HEART. — JESUITICAL ART.

QUIETISM, so accused of being obscure, was but too evident. It formed into a system, and established frankly, as supreme perfection, that state of immobility and impotency which the soul reaches at last, when it surrenders its activity.

Was it not simplicity itself to prescribe in set terms this lethargic doctrine, and give out noisily a theory of sleep ? “ Do not speak so loud, if you want to make people doze.” This is what the theologians, men of business, instinctively perceived ; they cared little for theology, and only wanted results.

We must do the Jesuits the justice to confess that they were disinterested enough in speculative opinions. We have seen how, since Pascal, they themselves wrote against their own casuistry. Since then they had tried Quietism : at one time they let Fenelon believe they would support him. But as soon as Louis XIV. had declared himself, “ they ducked like divers,”\* preached against their friend, and discovered forty errors in the *Maxims of Saints*. .

They had never well succeeded as theologians. Silence suited them better than all their systems. They had got it imposed by the pope upon the Dominicans, in the very

\* Bossuet, letter dated March 31. 1697. Works (ed. 1836), vol. xii. p. 85.

beginning of the century, and afterwards upon the Jansenists. Since then, their affairs went on better. It was precisely at the time they ceased writing, that they obtained from the sick king the power of disposing of benefices (1687), and thus, to the great surprise of the Gallicans, who had thought them conquered, they became the kings of the clergy of France.

Now, no more ideas, no more systems; they had grown tired of them. And the public also was getting tired of them. Besides, there is, we must confess, in the long lives of men, states, and religions, there is, I say, a time, when, having run from project to project, and from dream to dream, every idea is hated. In these profoundly material moments, every thing is rejected that is not tangible. Do people then become positive? No. But they do not return any more to the poetical symbols which in their youth they had adored. The old doter, in his second childhood, makes for himself some idol, some palpable, tangible god, and the coarser it is, they better he succeeds.

This explains the prodigious success with which the Jesuits in this age of lassitude spread, and caused to be accepted, a new object of worship, both very carnal and very material, — the heart of Jesus, either shown through the wound in his partly opened breast, or as plucked out and bloody.

Nearly the same thing had happened in the decrepitude of paganism. Religion had taken refuge in the sacrifice of bulls, the sanguinary Mithraic expiation — the worship of blood.

At the grand festival of the sacred heart which the Jesuits gave in the last century, in the Coliseum of Rome, they struck a medal with this motto, worthy of the solemnity, — “He gave himself to the people to eat, in the amphitheatre of Titus :” \* instead of a system, it was an emblem, a dumb sign. What triumph for the friends of obscurity and equivocation ! no equivocation of language can equal a material object, which may be interpreted in a thousand ways, for rendering ideas undecided and confused. The old Christian symbols, so often explained, so often translated, and those which are translated, present to the mind, at first sight, too distinct a meaning.

\* In 1771. On Sacred Hearts (by Tabaraud), p. 82.

They are austere symbols of death and mortification. The new one was far more obscure. This emblem, bloody it is true, but carnal and impassioned, speaks much less of death than of life. The heart palpitates, the blood streams, and yet it is a living man, who, showing his wound with his own hand, beckons to you to come and fathom his half-opened breast.

The heart!—that word has always been powerful; the heart, being the organ of the affections, expresses them in its own manner, swollen and heaving with sighs. The life of the heart, strong and confused, comprehends and mingles every kind of love. Such a sentence is wonderfully adapted to language of double meaning.

And who will understand it best? — Women: — with them the life of the heart is every thing. This organ, being the passage of the blood, and strongly influenced by the revolutions of the blood, is not less predominant in woman than her very sex.

The heart has been, now nearly two hundred years, the grand basis of modern devotion; as sex, or a strange question that related to it, had, for two hundred before, occupied the minds of the middle ages.

Strange! in that spiritual period, a long discussion, both public and solemn, took place throughout Europe, both in the schools and in the churches, upon an anatomical subject, of which one would not dare to speak in our days, except in the school of medicine! What was this subject? Conception.\* Only imagine all these monks, people sworn to celibacy, both Dominicans and Franciscans, boldly attacking the question, teaching it to all, preaching anatomy to children and little girls, filling their minds with their sex and its most secret mystery.†

The heart, a more noble organ, had the advantage of furnishing a number of dubious though decent expressions, a whole language of equivocal tenderness which did not cause a blush, and facilitated the intrigue of devout gallantry.

In the very beginning of the seventeenth century, the

\* See among other books that by Gravois, *De Ortu et Progressu Cultûs Immaculati Conceptûs*, 1764, in 4to.

† With the most shocking details which nobody would dare quote.

directors and confessors find a very convenient text in *the sacred heart*. But women take it quite differently, and in a serious sense : they grow warm and impassioned, and have visions. The Virgin appears to a country girl of Normandy, and orders her to adore the heart of Mary.\* The Visitandines called themselves the daughters of the *Heart of Jesus* : Jesus does not fail to appear to a Visitandine, Mademoiselle Marie Alacoque, and shows her his heart half opened.

She was a strong girl, and of a sanguine temperament, whom they were obliged to bleed constantly. She had entered the convent in her twenty-fourth year†, with her passions entire ; her infancy had not been miserably nipped in the bud, as it often happens to those who are immured at an early age. Her devotion was, from the very first, a violent love, that wished to suffer for the object loved. Having heard that Madame de Chantal had printed the name of Jesus on her breast with a hot iron, she did the same. The Lover was not insensible to this, and ever after visited her. It was with the knowledge, and under the direction, of a skilful superior, that Marie Alacoque made this intimate connection with the divine Bridegroom. She celebrated her espousals with him ; and a regular contract was drawn up by the superior, which Marie Alacoque signed with her blood. One day, when, according to her biographer, she had cleaned with her tongue the lips of a sick person, Jesus was so satisfied with her, that he permitted her to fix her lips to one of his divine wounds.‡

There was nothing in this relating to theology. It was merely a subject of physiology and medicine. Mademoiselle Alacoque was a girl of an ardent disposition, which was heightened by celibacy. She was by no means a mystic in the proper sense of the word. Happier far than Madame Guyon,

\* Eudes, the brother of Mazerai, the founder of the Eudists, wrote the life of this peasant, and was the real founder of the new worship. The Jesuits revived the thing, and profited by it. (See Tabaraud, p. 111.) I have sought in vain for the manuscript of Eudes in all their libraries. Have they made away with it?

† She had been put there when eight years old ; but she fell sick, and left at the age of ten. *Languet*, p. 7. 9. and 36.

‡ No legend has been more carefully preserved. See *Languet*, Galiffet, &c.



who did not see what she loved, she saw and touched the body of the divine Lover. The heart he showed her in his unseamed breast was a bloody intestine. The extremely sanguine plethora from which she was suffering, and which frequent bleeding could not relieve, filled her imagination with these visions of blood.

The Jesuits, who were great propagators of the new devotion, took good care not to explain precisely whether homage was to be paid to the symbolical heart and celestial love, or whether the heart of flesh was to be the object of adoration. When pressed to explain themselves, their answers depended on persons, times, and places. Their Father Galiffet made, at the same time, two contradictory replies: in Rome he said it was the symbolical heart; and in Paris, he said in print that there was no metaphor, that they honoured the flesh itself.\*

This equivocation was a source of wealth. In less than forty years four hundred and twenty-eight brotherhoods of the Sacred Heart were formed in France.

I cannot help pausing a moment, to admire how Equivocation triumphed throughout this age.

On whatever side I turn my eyes, I find it every where, both in things and persons. It sits upon the throne in the person of Madame de Maintenon. Is this person a queen who is seated by the king's side, and before whom princesses are standing — or is she not? The equivocal is also near the throne in the person of the humble Père La Chaise, the real king of the clergy of France, who from a garret at Versailles distributes the benefices. And do our loyal Gallicans and the scrupulous Jansenists abstain from the equivocal? Obedient, yet rebellious, preparing war though kneeling, they kiss the foot of the pope, while wishing to tie his hands; they spoil the best reasons by their *distinguo* and evasions. Indeed, when I put in opposition to the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries this Janus of the seventeenth, the two others appear to me as honest centuries, or, at the very least, sincere in good and in evil. But what falsehood and ugliness is concealed under the majestic

\* These two answers are to be read in p. 35. and p. 73. of Tabaraud's Sacred Hearts.

harmony of the seventeenth! Every thing is softened and shaded in the form, but the bottom is often the worse for it. Instead of the local inquisitions, you have the police of the Jesuits, armed with the king's authority. In place of a Saint Bartholomew, you have the long, the immense religious revolution, called the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, that cruel comedy of forced conversion; then, the unheard-of tragedy, of a proscription organised by all the bureaucratic and military means of a modern government! — Bossuet sings the triumph; and deceit, lying, and misery reign every where! Deceit in politics: local life destroyed without creating any central life. Deceit in morals: this polished court, this world of polite people receives an unexpected lesson from the *chamber of poisons*: the king suppresses the trial, fearing to find every one guilty!\* — And can devotion be real with such morals? — If you reproach the sixteenth century with its violent fanaticism, if the eighteenth appear to you cynical and devoid of human respect, confess at least also that lying, deceit, and hypocrisy are the predominant features of the seventeenth. That great historian Molière, has painted the portrait of this century, and found its name — Tartuffe.

I return to the Sacred Heart, which, in truth, I have not quitted, since it is during this period the illustrious and predominant example of the success of the equivocal. The Jesuits who, in general, have invented little, did not make the discovery, but they perceived very plainly the profit they might derive from it. We have seen how they gradually made themselves masters of the convents of women, though professing all the time to be strangers to them. The Visitation, especially, was under their influence.† The superior of Marie Alacoque, who had her confidence, and directed her connection with Jesus Christ, gave timely notice to Père La Chaise.

The thing happened just in time. The Jesuits sadly wanted

\* All this will appear in a new light, as soon as we read the passages in the important publication relative to State Prisons, which Mr. Ravaisson, senior, of the Arsenal Library, is now preparing.

† So much so that the Visitandines, the daughters of good St. François, became for the Jesuits the guardians and gaoles of the Port-Royal nuns at the time they were dispersed.

some popular machine to set in motion, for the profit of their policy. It was the moment when they thought, at least they told the king so, that England, sold by Charles II., would, in a short time, be entirely converted. Intrigue, money, women, every thing was turned to account, to bring it about. To King Charles they gave mistresses, and to his brother, confessors. The Jesuits, who, with all their tricks, are often chimerical, thought that by gaining over five or six lords, they would change all that protestant mass, which is protestant not only by belief, but also by interest, habit, and manner of living ; protestant to the core, and with English tenacity.

See then these famous politicians, gliding as stealthily as wolves, and fancying they will carry every thing by surprise. An essential point for them was to place with James, the king's brother, a secret preacher, who, in his private chapel, might work silently, and try his hand at a few conversions. To act the part of a converter, they required a man who was not only captivating, but especially ardent and fanatical ; such men were scarce. The latter qualifications were deficient in the young man whom Père La Chaise had in view. This was a Father La Colombière, who taught rhetoric in their college at Lyons : he was an agreeable preacher \*, an elegant writer, much esteemed by Patru, mild, docile, and a good sort of man. The only thing that was wanting was a little madness. To inoculate him with this, they introduced him to Mademoiselle Alacoque : he was sent to Paray-lemonial, where she resided, as confessor extraordinary of the Visitandines (1675). He was in his thirty-fourth year, and she in her twenty-eighth. Having been well prepared by her superior, she immediately saw in him the great servant of God, whom her visions had revealed to her, and the very same day she perceived in the ardent heart of Jesus her own heart united to the Jesuits.

La Colombière, being of a mild and feeble nature, was hurried away unresistingly into this ardent vortex of passion and

\* His sermons are weak. His *Spiritual Retreats* are more curious, being the young Jesuit's journal: the efforts he makes to be fanatical show how difficult fanaticism had become. His portrait, a very characteristic one, is at the head of the sermons.

fanaticism. He was kept for a year and a half in this spiritual furnace; he was then snatched away from Paray, and hurled red-hot into England. They were, however, still mistrustful of him, fearing he might cool, and sent him, from time to time, a few ardent and inspired lines: Marie Alacoque dictated, and the superior was her amanuensis.

He remained thus two years with the Duchess of York in London, so well concealed and shut up, that he did not even see the town. They brought to him a few lords, who thought it advantageous to be converted to the religion of the heir presumptive. England having at last discovered the papist conspiracy, La Colombière was accused, brought before parliament, and embarked for France, where he arrived ill; and though his superior sent him to Paray to see whether the nun could revive him, he died there of a fever.

However little inclined people may be to believe that great results are brought about by trifling causes, they are obliged, however, to confess, that this miserable intrigue had an incalculable effect upon France and the world. They wanted to gain England, and they presented themselves to her, not in the persons of the Gallicans, whom she respected, but in those of the Jesuits, whom she had always abhorred. At the very moment when Catholicism ought, in prudence at least, to have discarded the idolatries with which the Protestants reproached it, they published a new one, and the most offensive of all, the carnal and sensual devotion of the Sacred Heart. To mingle horror with ridicule, it was in 1685, the sad and lamentable year of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, that Marie Alacoque raised the first of those altars which overspread the whole of France. We know how England, confirmed in her Protestantism and horror of Rome by the Jesuits, took to herself a Dutch king, carried away Holland in her movement, and by this conjunction of the two maritime powers obtained the dominion of the seas.

The Jesuits may boast that they have been the means of setting Protestantism in England upon a very solid foundation. All the Father Mathews in the world will never be able to remove it.

Their political work, as we have seen, is important : it ended in marrying England to Holland — a marriage nearly fatal to France.

And what was their religious work among us, in the old days of Louis XIV.? What was the last use made of the omnipotent sway of the La Chaises and the Telliers? We well know : the destruction of Port-Royal, a military expedition to carry off fifteen old women, the dead dragged from their graves, and sacrilege committed by the hands of authority.\* This authority expiring in the terrible year 1709, which seemed to carry off, at one blow, the king and the kingdom, was employed by them, in all haste, to destroy their enemies.†

Port-Royal came to an end in 1709, Quietism had finished in 1698, and Gallicanism itself, the great religion of the throne, had been placed at the feet of the pope by the king in 1693. Behold Bossuet laid in the tomb by the side of Fenelon, and the latter next to Arnaud. The conquerors and the conquered repose in a common nullity.

The emblem prevailing, and being substituted for every system, people felt less and less the need of analysing, explaining, and thinking ; and they were glad of it. The explanation the most favourable to authority is still a giving of accounts, that is to say, a homage paid to the liberty of the mind. But in the shadow of an obscure emblem, one may, henceforth, without shaping any theory, or allowing any advantage to be taken, apply indifferently the practice of all the various theories that

\* See the details in the Hist. Mem. on Port-Royal (1756), and in General History (1757).

† They pursue them with the same fury in our time, especially the sisters whom they believe to be Jansenists. The Jansenists wish to suffer and die in silence : they do not want us to pity them. History cannot allow this martyr resignation, but will mention, as one of the most curious and unnoticed facts, the excellent review they publish in a few copies for themselves (*Revue Ecclésiastique*, Rue Saint-Séverin, No. 4.). In it they have replied, forcibly, but moderately, to the unbecoming declamations against Port-Royal, made by Father Ravignan in Saint-Séverin (1842), as well as to other ultra-montane novelties preached by that Jesuit. Who would believe that, whilst persecuting and abusing the Jansenists, the Jesuit party has dared to claim (in the House of Peers) the names of the illustrious Jansenists ; for instance, that of Rollin? Do they inherit from those they assassinate?

had been abandoned, and follow them alternately or conjointly, according to the interest of the day.

Wise policy, excellent wisdom, with which they cover their nothingness ! Having dispensed with reasoning for others, they lose the faculty of reasoning altogether, and, in the hour of danger, they find themselves disarmed. This is what happened to them in the eighteenth century. The terribly learned contest that then took place found them mute. Voltaire let fly a hundred thousand arrows against them, without awakening them. Rousseau pressed and crushed them, without getting one word out of them.

Who then could answer ? Theology was no longer known to the theologians.\* The persecutors of the Jansenists mingle in their books published in the name of Marie Alacoque, both Jansenist and Molinist opinions, and without being aware of it.† They composed, in 1708, the manual which has since become the basis of instruction adopted in our seminaries ; and this manual contains the entirely new doctrine, that on every papal decision Jesus Christ *inspires* the pope to decide, and the bishops to obey : every thing is an oracle and a miracle in this clownish system ; reason is decidedly exterminated from theology.

From that time there is very little of a dogmatical character, and still less of sacred history ; an instruction which would be void, if ancient casuistry did not assist in filling up the vacuum with immoral subtleties.

The only part of mankind to whom they have addressed themselves for a long time, namely women, is the world of sensibility : they pretend not to ask for science ; they wish for impressions, rather than ideas. The less they are busied about ideas, the easier it is to keep them ignorant of outward events, and make them strangers to the progress of time.

When they maintain that holiness consists in sacrificing the

\* It appears to be singularly so in our time. What a sight to see preached solemnly before the highest ecclesiastical authority some sermon or other, which, from first to last, is only a heresy ! The adversaries of their theology are the only persons who remember it.

† Tabaraud, On the Sacred Hearts, p. 38.

mind, the more material the worship, the more it serves to attain that end; the more the mind is degraded, the holier it becomes. To couple salvation with the exercise of moral virtues, would be to require the exercise of reason. But what do they want with virtue? Wear this medal: "*it will blot out your iniquities.*"\* Reason would still have a share in religion, if, as reason teaches us, it was necessary for salvation, absolutely to love God. Marie Alacoque has seen that it was sufficient *not to hate him*; and those who are devoted to the Sacred Heart are saved unconditionally.

When the Jesuits were suppressed, they had in their hands no other religious means than this remnant of paganism, and in it they placed all their hope of coming to life again. They had engravings made, to which they added the motto, "I will give them the shield of my heart."

The popes, who, at first, were uneasy about the weak point which such a materialism would offer to the attacks of the philosophers †, have found out in our time that it is very useful to them, being addressed to a class of people, who seldom read the philosophers, and who, though devout, are nevertheless material. They have therefore preserved the precious equivocation of the ideal and the carnal heart, and forbidden any explanation as to whether the words "*Sacred Heart*" designated the love of God for man, or some bit of bleeding flesh. ‡ By reducing the thing to the idea, the impassioned attraction in which its success consisted would be taken from it.

Even in the last century, some bishops had gone farther, declaring that *flesh* was here the *principal* object; and they had placed this flesh in certain hymns, after the Trinity, as a fourth person. Priests, women, and young girls have all, since then, vied with one another in this devotion. I have before me

\* The medal of the Immaculate Conception, made under the auspices of Mr. de Quélen, has already saved assassins and other wretches. See the notice written by a Lazarist, and the passages quoted by Mr. Génin, *The Jesuits and the University*, pp. 87—97.

† Lambertini, *De servorum Dei beatificatione*, vol. iv. part ii. lib. 4. ch. 30. p. 310. We are sorry to see a man of genius and sense work hard to be only half absurd.

‡ Pius VI. condemned the council of Pistoia, that had tried to make a distinction; Tabaraud, *ibid.* p. 79.

a manual, much used in country places, in which they teach the persons of their community, who pray for one another, how they join hearts, and how these hearts, once united, "ought to desire to enter into the opening of the heart of Jesus, and be incessantly sinking into that amorous wound." *The art of abso*

The brotherhood, in their manuals, have occasionally found it gallant to put the heart of Mary above that of Jesus (see that of Nantes, 1769). In their engravings, she is generally younger than her Son, being, for instance, about twenty, whereas he is thirty years old, so that, at first sight, he seems to be rather her husband or lover than her Son. *In the 17th*

The most violent satire against the Jesuits is what they have made themselves — their art, the pictures and statues they have inspired. They are at once characterised by the severe sentence of Poussin, whose Christ did not appear to them pretty enough: — "We cannot imagine a Christ with his head on one side, or like Father Douillet's." Yet Poussin saw the best days of the Jesuit art: what would he have said, if he had seen what followed? all that decrepid coquetry, that thinks it smiles whilst it grimaces, those ridiculous glances, dying eyes, and such like deformities. The worst is, they who think only of the flesh, know no longer how to represent it. As the thought grows more and more material and insipid, the form becomes defaced, degraded from picture to picture, ignoble, foppish, affected, heavy, dull — that is to say, shapeless.\*

We may judge of men by the art they admire; and I confess it is no easy task to augur favourably of the souls of those who inspire this art, and recommend these engravings, hanging them up in their churches, and distributing them by thousands and millions. Such taste is an ominous sign. Many immoral people still possess a sentiment of elegance. But willingly to

\* In 1834, being busy with Christian iconography, I looked over the collections of the portraits of Christ in the Royal Library. Those published within the last thirty years are the most humiliating I have ever seen, both for art and human nature. Every man (whether a philosopher or a believer) who retains any sentiment of religion will be disgusted with them. Every impropriety, every sensuality and low passion, is there: the childish, dandified seminarist, the licentious priest, the fat curate who looks like *Maingrat*, &c. The engraving is as good as the drawing — a skewer and the snuff of a tallow candle.



ake to the ignoble and false, discovers a sad degradation of the soul.

An undeniable truth is here made manifest ; which is, that art is the only thing inaccessible to falsehood. Being the offspring of the heart and natural inspiration, it cannot be allied to what is false, it will not be violated ; it protests, and if the false triumphs, it dies. All the rest may be aped and acted. They very well managed to make a theology in the sixteenth and a morality in the seventeenth century ; but never could they form an art. They can ape the holy and the just ; but how can they mimic the beautiful ? — Thou art ugly, poor *Fastuffe*, and ugly shalt thou remain : it is thy token. What ! thou reach the beautiful, or ever lay a finger upon it ? This would be impious beyond all impiety ! — The beautiful is the face of God !

## PART II.

ON DIRECTION IN GENERAL, AND ESPECIALLY IN THE  
NINETEENTH CENTURY.

## CHAPTER I.

RESEMBLANCES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SEVENTEENTH AND  
NINETEENTH CENTURIES. — CHRISTIAN ART. — IT IS WE WHO HAVE  
RESTORED THE CHURCH. — WHAT IT ADDS TO THE POWER OF THE  
PRIEST. — THE CONFESSIONAL.

THERE are two objections to be made against all that I have said, and I will state them :—

First. "The examples are taken from the seventeenth century, at a time when the direction was influenced by theological questions, which now no longer occupy either the world or the Church ; for instance, the question of grace and free-will, and that of Quietism or repose in love." But this I have already answered. Such questions are obsolete, dead, if you will, as theories ; but, in the spirit and practical method which emanate from these theories, they are, and ever will be, living : there are no longer to be found speculative people, simple enough to trace out expressly a doctrine of lethargy and moral annihilation ; but there will always be found enough quacks to practise quietly this lethargic art. If this be not clear enough, I will, in a moment, make it clearer than some people would desire.

Secondly. "Are the examples you have shown from the books and letters of the great men of the famous age sufficiently conclusive for our own time? Might not those profound and subtle men of genius, who dived so deeply into the science of directing souls, have entered into refinements, of which the common herd of confessors and directors cannot now conceive any idea? Can you fear any thing of the sort from the poor

simple priests whom we have now? Pray, where are our St. François de Sales, our Bossuets, and our Fenelons? Do you not see that not only the clergy no longer possess such men, but that they have degenerated generally, and as a class. The great majority of the priests are of rustic families. The peasant, even when he is not poor, finds it convenient to lighten the expenses of his family, by placing his son in the seminary. To nursery education, that which we receive from our parents before any other, they are total strangers. The seminary by no means repairs this inconvenience of origin and former condition. If we judge by those who come from the hands of the Sulpicians, Lazarists, &c., we shall be inclined to believe that there has been a deep plan laid among the upper leaders, to form none but indifferent priests, who would be so much the more dependent, and blind to the influence exercised over them contrary to their real interests. What then do you fear? Is not this intellectual degradation of the clergy sufficiently comforting? How could such men follow, in the confession and direction, the learned tactics of the priests of former ages? The dangers you point out are imaginary."

To this it is easy to answer : —

Mental distinction and good education are not so necessary, as is generally thought, for enslaving souls that are willing to be ruled. Authority, character, position, and costume fortify the priest, and make good in him, what was wanting in the man. He gains his ascendancy less by his skill than by time and perseverance. If his mind is but little cultivated, it is also less taken up with a variety of new ideas, which incessantly come crowding upon us moderns, amusing and fatiguing us. With fewer ideas, views, and projects, but with an interest, an aim, and ever the same end invariably kept in view — this is the way to succeed.

Must we take it for granted, because you are clownish, you are less cunning on that account? Peasants are circumspect, often full of cunning, and endued with an indefatigable constancy in following up any petty interest. How many long years, what different means, and often indirect ones, will such a one employ, in order to add two feet of land to his field. • Do

you think that his son, *Monsieur le Curé*, will be less patient or less ardent in his endeavours to get possession of a soul, to govern this woman, or to enter that family?

These peasant families have often much vigour, a certain sap, belonging to the blood and constitution, which either gives wit, or supplies the place of it. Those in the South especially, where the clergy raise their principal recruits, furnish them with intrepid speakers, who do not need to know any thing, and who, by their very ignorance, are, perhaps, but in a more direct communication with the simple persons, to whom they address themselves. They speak out loudly, with energy and assurance: educated persons would be more reserved, and less proper to fascinate the weak; they would not dare to attempt, so audaciously, a clownish mesmerism in spiritual things.

In this, I must confess, there is a serious difference between our own century and the seventeenth, when the clergy of all parties were so learned. That culture, those vast studies, that great theological and literary activity were for the priest of that time, the most powerful diversion in the midst of temptations. Science, or, at the very least, controversy and disputation, created for him, in a position that was often very worldly, a sort of solitude, an *alibi*, as one may say, that effectually preserved him. But ours, who have nothing of the sort, who, moreover, spring from a hardy and material race, and do not know how to employ this embarrassing vigour, must indeed require a fund of virtue!

The great men from whom we have drawn our examples, had a wonderful defence against spiritual and carnal desires; better than a defence, they had wings that raised them from the earth, at the critical moment, above temptation. By these wings, I mean the love of God, the love of genius for itself, its natural effort to remain on high and ascend, its abhorrence of degradation.

Being chiefs of the clergy of France, the only clergy then flourishing, and responsible to the world for whatever subsisted by their faith, they kept their hearts exalted to the level of the great part they had to perform. One thought was the guardian of their lives — a thought which they repressed, but which

did not the less sustain them in delicate trials: it was this, "that in them resided the Church."

Their great experience of the world and domestic life \*, their tact and skilful management of men and things, far from weakening morality, as one might believe, rather defended it in them, enabling them to perceive, and have a presentiment of perils, to see the enemy coming, not to allow him the advantage of unexpected attacks, or, at least, to know how to elude him.

We have seen how Bossuet stopped the soft confidence of a weak nun at the very first word. The little we have said of Fenelon's *direction* shows sufficiently how the dangerous director evaded the dangers.

Those eminently spiritual persons could keep up for years, between heaven and earth, this tender dialectic of the love of God. But is it the same in these days with men who have no wings, who crawl and cannot fly? Incapable of those ingenious turnings and windings, by which passion went on sportively, and eluding itself, do they not run the risk of stumbling at the first step?

I know well that this absence of early education, and vulgarity or clownishness, may often put an insurmountable barrier between priests and well-bred women. Many things, however, that would not be tolerated in another man are reckoned in them as merits. Stiffness is austerity, and awkwardness is accounted the simplicity of a saint, who has ever lived in a desert. They are measured by a different and more indulgent rule than the laity. The priest takes advantage of every thing that is calculated to make him be considered as a man apart, of his dress, his position, his mysterious church, that invests the most vulgar with a poetical gleam.

Who gave them this last advantage? Ourselves. We, who have reinstated, rebuilt, as one may say, those very churches they had disregarded. The priests were building up their

\* Another great difference between them and those of our age. Ours know neither precedents, differences, times, nor persons. When they come from their hiding-places, they are savage, rough, and violent: they rudely push forward at a venture, and fall upon the first passenger, who is forced to check them.

Saint-Sulpices, and other heaps of stones, when the laity retrieved Nôtre-Dame and Saint-Ouen. We pointed out to them the Christian spirit of these living stones\*, but they did not see it; we taught it them, but they could not understand. And how long did the misconception last? Not less than forty years, ever since the appearance of the *Génie du Christianisme*. The priests would not believe us, when we explained to them this sublime edifice; they did not recognise it; but who can wonder? It belongs only to those who understood it.†

At length, however, they have changed their opinion. They have found it to be political and clever to speak as we do, and extol Christian architecture. They have decked themselves out with their churches, again invested themselves with this glorious cloak, and assumed in them a triumphant posture. The crowd comes, looks, and admires. Truly, if we are to judge of a well-dressed man by his coat, he who is invested with the splendour of a Nôtre-Dame of Paris, or a Cologne cathedral, is apparently the giant of the spiritual world. Alexander, on his departure from India, wishing to deceive

\* I wish to take the liberty of reminding them (in answer to their silly attacks), that I have done two things for the art of the middle ages: 1st, *I have explained its principle and life*, which my illustrious predecessors in this career, both French and German, had not done; 2dly, *I have explained its ruin*, and indicated the innate causes of its decline. I have admired it, but I have classed it, without allowing myself to be carried away by exclusive admiration. See my *History of France* (1833), the last chapter of vol. ii., and particularly the last ten pages. In this same volume I have made a serious mistake, which I wish to rectify. In speaking of ecclesiastical celibacy (temp. Gregory VII.), I have said that married men could never have raised those sublime monuments, the spire of Strasbourg, &c. I find, on the contrary, that the architects of the Gothic churches were laymen, and generally married. Erwin de Steinbach, who built Strasbourg, had a celebrated daughter, Sabina, who was herself an artist.

† And they who understood it are the only persons who respect and regret it. If we were the mortal enemies of those churches, we should do what they are doing at the present time — we would do away with their antique colour, the moss of by-gone ages, their mutilated appearance, and every thing that makes them venerable.\* We would efface all that, and set up in them statues of all ages, as they want to do in Nôtre-Dame, and make a museum of them. The church has resisted both revolutions and time; but it will not be able to withstand the conspiracy of the masons and the priests. The mason makes the priest believe that they build Gothic in 1845. See them both scratching, upsetting, and demolishing the old Gothic, and sure of making a new one.

posterity as to the size of his Macedonians, had a camp traced out on the ground in which a space of ten feet was allotted to each of his soldiers. What an immense place is this church, and what an immense host must inhabit this wonderful dwelling ! Optical delusion adds still more to the effect. Every proportion changes. The eye is deceived and deceives itself, at the same time, with these sublime lights and deepening shades, all calculated to increase the illusion. The man whom in the street you judged, by his surly look, to be a village schoolmaster, is here a prophet. He is transformed by this majestic frame-work ; his heaviness becomes strength and majesty ; his voice has formidable echoes. Women and children tremble and are afraid.

When a woman returns home, she finds every thing prosy and paltry. Had she even Pierre Corneille for a husband, she would think him pitiful, if he lived in the dull house they still show us. Intellectual grandeur in a low apartment does not affect her. The comparison makes her sad, bitterly quiet. The husband puts up with it, and smiles, or pretends to do so : " Her director has turned her brain," says he aloud, and adds, aside, " After all, she only sees him at church." But what place, I ask, is more powerful over the imagination, richer in illusions, and more fascinating than the church ? It is precisely the church that ennobles, raises, exaggerates, and sheds a poetical ray upon this otherwise vulgar man.

Do you see that solemn figure, adorned with all the gold and purple of his pontifical dress, ascending, with the thought, the prayer of a multitude of ten thousand men, the triumphal steps in the choir of St. Denis ? Do you see him still, above all that kneeling mass, hovering as high as the vaulted roofs, his head reaching the capitals, and lost among the winged heads of the angels, whence he hurls his thunder ? Well, it is the same man, this terrible archangel himself, who presently descends for her, and now, mild and gentle, goes yonder into that dark chapel, to listen to her in the languid hours of the afternoon ! Delightful hour of tumultuous, but tender sensations ! (Why does the heart palpitate so strongly here ?) How dark the church becomes ! Yet it is not late. The great rose-win-

dow over the portal glitters with the setting sun. But it is quite another thing in the choir ; dark shadows envelope it, and beyond is obscurity. One thing astounds and almost frightens us, however far we may be, which is the mysterious old painted glass, at the farthest end of the church, on which the design is no longer distinguishable, twinkling in the shade, like an illegible magic scroll of unknown characters. The chapel is not less dark on that account ; you can no longer discern the ornaments and delicate moulding entwined in the vaulted roof ; the shadow deepening blends and confounds the outlines. But, as if this chapel were not yet dark enough, it contains, in a retired corner, a narrow recess of dark oak, where that man, all emotion, and that trembling woman, so close to each other, are whispering together about the love of God.



## CHAPTER II.

CONFESSION. — PRESENT EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG CONFESSOR. — THE CONFESSOR IN THE MIDDLE AGES : — FIRST, BELIEVED ; SECONDLY, MORTIFIED HIMSELF ; THIRDLY, WAS SUPERIOR BY CULTURE ; FOURTHLY, USED TO INTERROGATE LESS. — THE CASUISTS WROTE FOR THEIR TIME. — THE DANGERS OF THE YOUNG CONFESSOR. — HOW HE STRENGTHENS HIS TOTTERING POSITION.

A WORTHY parish priest has often told me that the sore part of his profession, that which filled him with despair, and his life with torment, was the confession.

The studies, with which they prepare for it in the seminaries, are such as entirely ruin the disposition, weaken the body, and enervate and defile the soul.

Lay education, without making any pretension to an extraordinary degree of purity, and though the pupils it forms will, one day, enjoy public life, takes, however, especial care to keep from the eyes of youth the glowing descriptions that excite the passions.

Ecclesiastical education, on the contrary, which pretends to form men superior to man, pure virgin minds, angels, fixes precisely the attention of its pupils upon things that are to be for ever forbidden them, and gives them for subjects of study terrible temptations, such as would make all the saints run the risk of damnation. Their printed books have been quoted, but not so their copy-books, by which they complete the two last years of seminary education : these copy-books contain things that the most audacious have never dared to publish.

I dare not quote here what has been revealed to me about this idiotic education by those who have been its martyrs, and narrowly escaped destruction<sup>c</sup> from it. No one can imagine the condition of a poor young man, still a believer, and very sincere, struggling between the terrors and temptations with which they surround him, at pleasure, with two unknown subjects, either one of which might drive him mad, *Woman ! Hell !* — and yet

obliged to look incessantly at the abyss, blinded, through these impure books, with his sanguine youthful constitution.

This surprising imprudence proceeded originally from the very scholastic supposition, that the body and soul could be perfectly well kept apart. They had imagined they could lead them like two coursers, by different enticements, the one to the right and the other to the left. They did not reflect that, in this case, man would be in the predicament of the chariot sculptured upon the tablet of the Louvre, which, pulled both ways, must inevitably be dashed to pieces.

However different these two substances may be in nature, it is but too manifest that they are mingled in action. Not a motion of the soul but acts upon the body, which re-acts in the same manner. The most cruel discipline inflicted upon the body will destroy it rather than prevent its action upon the soul. To believe that a vow, a few prayers, and a black robe, will deliver you from the flesh, and make you a pure spirit—is not this perfect childishness?

They will answer me by the middle ages, and by the multitudes, who have lived mortified lives.

For this I have not one answer, but twenty, which admit of no reply. It is too easy to show that priests in general, and especially the confessor, were then totally different from what they have been for the two last centuries.

I. The first answer will seem, perhaps, harsh — *Then the priest believed.* “What! the priest no longer believes? Do you mean to say that in speaking of his faith with so much energy, he is a hypocrite and a liar?” No, I will allow him to be sincere. But there are two manners of believing, there are many degrees in faith. We are told that Lope de Vega (who, as it is known, was a priest) could not officiate: at the moment of the sacrifice, his fancy pictured the Passion too strongly, he would burst into tears and faint. Compare this with the coquettish pantomime of the Jesuit, who acts mass at Fribourg, or with the prelate whom I have seen at the altar showing to advantage his delicate small hand. The priest believed, and *his penitent believed.* Unheard-of terrors, miracles, devils, and hell, filled the church. The motto, “God hears you,” was

engraven not only in the wood, but in the heart. It was not a plank that partitioned off the confessional, but the sword of the archangel, the thought of the last judgment.

II. If the priest spoke in the name of the spirit, he was partly justified in doing so, having purchased spiritual power by the *suicide of the body*. His long prayers at night would have sufficed to wear him out; but they found more direct means in excessive fasts. Fasting was the diet of those poor schools of Beggars and Cappets, whose scanty meal was composed of arguments. Half dead before the age of manhood, they cooled their blood with herbs producing a deadly chill, and exhausted it by frequent bleedings. The number of bleedings, to which the monks had to submit, was provided in their rules. Their stomachs were soon destroyed, and their strength impaired. Bernard and Theresa were weakened by continual vomitings, even the sense of taste was lost: the Saint, says his biographer, took blood for butter. *Mortification* was not then an idle word, it was not a separation of the body and soul, but a genuine and honest suppression of the body.

III. The priest believed himself to be, in this sense, the man of the spirit, and he really was so, by the *superiority of culture*. He knew every thing, the layman nothing. Even when the priest was young, he was truly the father, the other the child. In our days it is just the contrary; the layman, in cities at least, is generally more learned than the priest; even the peasant, if he be a father of a family, with business and interests, or has served in the army, has more experience than his *curé*, and more real knowledge; his speaking more ungrammatically is of no consequence. But the contrast is still more striking, when this inexperienced priest, who has known nothing but his own seminary, sees at his knees a fashionable, intriguing, impassioned woman, who now, perhaps, at the close of her seventh lustrum, has passed through every thing sentimental and ideal. What! *she* ask his advice? *she* call him *father*? Why, every word she utters is a revelation for him — astonishment and fear take possession of his soul. If he is not wise enough to hold his tongue, he will be ridiculous. His penitent, who came to him all trembling, will depart laughing

IV. There is another difference which will strike only those who are acquainted with the middle ages—the *language was not developed* as it now is. No one being then acquainted with our habits of analysing and developing, confession was naturally reduced to a simple declaration of sin, without any detail of circumstances. Still less could they deduce the phenomena which accompany passion—the desires, doubts, and fears which give it the power of illusion, and make it contagious. There was, if you will, confession; but the woman could not express herself, nor could the priest have understood her; she was not able to reveal the depth of her thought, nor could he have reached it if she had done so. Confession on one side, and sentence on the other, nothing more; there was neither dialogue, confidence, nor disclosing of the heart.

If the priest has not enough imagination and wit to put the questions from the store of his own mind, he has had in his hands for the last two centuries, ready-made questions, which he may ask in due order, and by which he will force his fair penitent to dive into her own thoughts, sift her own secrets to deliver them over to him, open her heart's fibres, as one may say, thread by thread, and wind off before him the complete skein, which he henceforth holds in his hands.

This terrible instrument of inquiry, which in unskilful hands may corrupt the soul by its injudicious probing, must necessarily be modified when morals change. Morality does not vary, but morals do, according to the lapse of time; yet this very simple truth never once entered their heads. They have adhered to the morals of the period, when the intellectual movement ceased, as far as they were concerned. The manuals they put into the hands of the young confessor, are grounded upon the authority of the casuists, whom Pascal annihilated long ago. Even if the immorality of their solutions had not been demonstrated, remember that Escobar and Sanchez made their questions for a horribly corrupt period, from which, thank God, we are far removed. Their casuistry was from the first addressed to the corrupt and disordered state of society occasioned by long religious warfare. You will find among them crimes that were perhaps never perpetrated, except by the

brutal soldiers of the Duke of Alva, or by the exiled, lawless, and godless band that Wallenstein drew after him, a wandering mass of iniquity which would have been abhorred by ancient Sodom.

We know not how to qualify this culpable routine. These books, composed for a barbarous age, unparalleled in crimes, are the same that you give to your pupils in our own civilised age. And this young priest, who, according to your instructions, believes that the world is still that dreadful world, who enters the confessional\* with all this villanous science, and his imagination full of monstrous cases, you, imprudent men! (what shall I call you?) you confront him with a child who has never left her mother's side, who knows nothing, has nothing to say, and whose greatest crime is that she has not learned her catechism properly, or has hurt a butterfly!

I shudder at the interrogatory to which he will subject her, and at what he will teach her in his conscientious brutality. But he questions her in vain. She knows nothing, and says nothing. He scolds her, and she weeps. Her tears will be soon dried, but it will be long before she ceases to reflect. \*

A volume might be composed on the first start of the young priest, and his imprudent steps, all fatal either to himself or others. The penitent is occasionally more circumspect than the confessor. She is amused at his proceedings, and looks at him coldly when he becomes animated and goes too far.† Sometimes, forgetting himself in his impassioned dream, he is suddenly and roughly awakened by a lesson from an intelligent and satirical woman kneeling before him.

This cruel lesson has given him an icy chill. Confessors do not suffer such a repulse, without remaining a long time bitter,

\* Read the fine passages in P. L. Courier and Mr. Génin's works, so full of spirit and eloquence, and so glowing with the indignation of an honest man. *The Jesuits and the University*, part ii. ch. v.

† And how would not this animation be caused by such contiguity. It is sufficient that persons of different sexes pray together in the same room for madness to seize them and turn their heads. This is what happens in the meetings of the exalted Protestants in the United States and elsewhere. Read Swift's sensible and judicious little work, "Fragment on the Mechanical Operations of the Spirit." (See especially towards the end.)

sometimes spiteful for ever. The young priest knew well that he was the victim, the disinherited of this world, but it had not been forced home upon him. Gall drowns his heart. He prays to God (if he can still pray), that the world may perish!

Then returning to his senses, and seeing himself irremediably limed in that black winding sheet, that death-robe that he will wear to the grave, he shrouds himself within it as he curses it, and muses how he may make the best of his torment.

The only thing he can do, is to strengthen his position as a priest. He has two ways of succeeding, either by an understanding with the Jesuits, or by paying a servile court to *Monseigneur* the bishop. I recommend him especially to be violent against the philosophers, and to bark at *pantheism*. Let him also blacken his fellow-priests, and he will appear so much the purer himself. Let him prove himself a thorough hater, and they will forgive him his love.

The brotherhood will henceforth protect, defend, and cover him. What would have ruined the solitary priest, becomes sanctity itself when he becomes one of a party. Before, he would have been suspended, and sent perhaps for six months to *La Trappe*—now he is made Vicar-general.

Only let him be prudent in the delicate business which the fraternity wishes to conceal; let him learn the arts of priests—to feign, to wait, to know when and how to be satisfied; to advance but slowly, openly, and above ground sometimes, but more often secretly, underneath.

## CHAPTER III.

CONFESSION.—THE CONFESSOR AND THE HUSBAND.—HOW THEY DETACH  
THE WIFE.—THE DIRECTOR.—DIRECTORS ASSOCIATED TOGETHER.—  
ECCLESIASTICAL POLICY.

WHEN I reflect on all that is contained in the words *confession* and *direction*, those simple words, that immense power, the most complete in the world, and endeavour to analyse their whole meaning, I tremble with fear. I seem to be descending endless spiral stairs into the depths of a dark mine. Just now I felt contempt for the priest; now I fear him.

But we must not be afraid; we must look him in the face. Let us candidly put down in set terms the language of the confessor.

"*God hears you*, hears you through me; through me God will answer you." Such is the first word; such is the literal copy. The authority is accepted as infinite and absolute, without any bargaining as to measure.

"But you tremble, you dare not tell this terrible God your weakness and childishness; well! *tell them to your father*; a father has a right to know the secrets of his child; he is an indulgent father, who wants to know them only to absolve them. He is a sinner like yourself: has he then a right to be severe? Come, then, my child, come and tell me—what you have, not dared to whisper in your mother's ear; tell it me; who will ever know?"

Then is it, amid sobs and sighs, from the choking heaving breast that the fatal word rises to the lips: it escapes, and she hides her head. Oh! he who heard that has gained an immense advantage, and will keep it. Would to God that he did not abuse it! It was heard, remember, not by the wood and the dark oak of the confessional, but by ears of flesh and blood.

And this man now knows of this woman, what the husband has not known in all the long effusion of his heart by day and

night, what even her own mother does not know, who thinks she knows her entirely, having had her so many times a naked infant upon her knees.

This man knows, and will know—don't be afraid of his forgetting it. If the confession is in good hands, so much the better, for it is for ever. And she, she knows full well she has a master of her intimate thoughts. Never will she pass by that man without casting down her eyes.

The day when this mystery was imparted, he was very near her, she felt it. On a higher seat, he seemed to have an irresistible ascendancy over her. A magnetic influence has vanquished her, for she wished not to speak, and she spoke in spite of herself. She felt herself fascinated, like the bird by the serpent.

So far, however, there is no art on the side of the priest. The force of circumstances has done every thing, that of religious institution, and that of nature. As a priest, he received her at his knees, and listened to her. Then, master of her secret, of her thoughts, the thoughts of a woman, he became man again, without, perhaps, either wishing or knowing it, and laid upon her, weakened and disarmed, the heavy hand of man.

And her family now? her husband? Who will dare to assert that his position is the same as before?

Every reflecting mind knows full well, that thought is the most personal part of the person. The master of a person's thoughts is he to whom the person belongs. The priest has the soul fast, as soon as he has received the dangerous pledge of the first secrets, and he will hold it faster and faster. The two husbands now take shares, for now there are two—one has the soul, the other the body.

Take notice that in this sharing, one of the two really has the whole; the other, if he gets any thing, gets it by favour. Thought by its nature is prevailing and absorbing; the master of her thought, in the natural progress of his sway, will ever go on reducing the part that seemed to remain in the possession of the other. The husband may think himself well off, if, a



widower with respect to the soul, he still preserves the involuntary, inert, and lifeless possession.

How humiliating, to obtain nothing of what was your own, but by authorisation and indulgence\*; to be seen, and followed into your most private intimacy, by an invisible witness, who governs you and gives you your allowance; to meet in the street a man who knows better than yourself your most secret weaknesses, who bows cringingly, turns and laughs. It is nothing to be powerful, if one is not powerful alone — alone ! God does not allow shares.

It is with this reasoning that the priest is sure to comfort himself in his persevering efforts to sever this woman from her family, to weaken her kindred ties, and, particularly, to undermine the rival authority—I mean, the husband's. The husband is a heavy encumbrance to the priest. But if this husband suffers at being so well known, spied, and seen, when he is alone, he who sees all suffers still more. She comes now every moment to tell innocently of things that transport him beyond himself. Often would he stop her, and would willingly say, "Mercy, madam, this is too much !" And though these details make him suffer the torment of the damned, he wants still more, and requires her to enter further and further into these avowals, both humiliating for her, and cruel for him, and to give him the detail of the saddest circumstances.

The confessor of a young woman may boldly be termed the jealous secret enemy of the husband. If there be one exception to this rule (and I am willing to believe there may be), he is a hero, a saint, a martyr, a man more than man.

The whole business of the confessor is to *insulate* this woman, and he does it conscientiously. It is the duty of him who leads her in the way of salvation to disengage her gradually from all earthly ties. It requires time, patience, and skill. The question is not how these strong ties may suddenly be

\* St. François de Sales, the best of them all, takes compassion on the poor husband. He removes certain scruples of the wife, &c. Even this kindness is singularly humiliating. (See ed. 1833, vol. viii. pp. 254. 312. 347, 348.) Marriage, though one of the sacraments, appears here as a suppliant on its knees before the *direction*, seems to ask pardon, and suffer penance.

broken ; but to discover well, first of all, of what threads each tie is composed, and to disentangle, and gnaw them away thread by thread.

And all this may easily be done by him who, awakening new scruples every day, fills a timid soul with uneasiness about the lawfulness of her most holy affections. If any one of ~~them~~ be innocent, it is, after all, an earthly attachment, a robbery against God : God wants all. No more relationship or friendship ; nothing must remain. "A brother?" no, he is still a man. "But at least my sister? my mother?" "No, you must leave all — leave them intentionally, and from your soul ; you shall always see them, my child ; nothing will appear changed ; only, close your heart." A moral solitude is thus established around. Friends go away, offended at her freezing politeness. "People are cool in this house." But why this strange reception? They cannot guess ; she does not always know why herself. The thing is commanded ; is it not enough? Obedience consists in obeying without reason.

"People are cold here:" this is all that can be said. The husband finds the house larger and more empty. His wife is become quite changed : though present, her mind is absent ; she acts as if unconscious of acting ; she speaks, but not like herself. Every thing is changed in their intimate habits, always for a good reason : "To-day is a fast-day" — and tomorrow? "Is a holyday." The husband respects this austerity ; he would consider it very wrong to trouble this exalted devotion ; he is sadly resigned : "this becomes embarrassing," says he : "I had not foreseen it ; my wife is turning saint."\*

In this sad house there are fewer friends, yet there is a new one, and a very assiduous one : the habitual confessor is now the director† ; a great and important change.

As her confessor he received her at church, at regular hours ; but as director he visits her at his own hour, sees her at her house, and occasionally at his own.

\* For the *insulted* state of a father of a family in Catholic countries, see M. BOUVET'S *Du Catholicisme*, p. 175. (ed. 1840.)

† The name is rare in our days, but the thing is common ; he who confesses for a length of time becomes director. Several persons have, at the same time, a confessor, an extraordinary confessor, and a director.

As confessor he was generally passive, listening much, and speaking little; if he prescribed, it was in a few words; but as director he is all activity; he not only prescribes acts, but what is more important, by intimate conversation he influences her thoughts.

To the confessor she tells her sins; she owes him nothing more; but to the director every thing must be told: she must speak of herself and her relations, her business and her interests. When she entrusts to that man her highest interest, that of eternal salvation, how can she help confiding to him her little temporal concerns, the marriage of her children, and the will she intends to make? &c. &c.

The confessor is bound to secrecy, he is silent (or ought to be). The director, however, is not so tied down. He may reveal what he knows, especially to a priest, or to another director. Let us suppose about twenty priests assembled in a house, (or not quite so many, out of respect for the law against meetings,) who may be, some of them the confessors, and others directors of the same persons: as directors, they may mutually exchange their information, put upon a table a thousand or two thousand consciences in common, combine their relations, like so many chessmen, regulate beforehand all the movements and interests, and allot to one another the different parts they have to play to bring the whole to their purpose.

The Jesuits alone formerly worked thus in concert; but it is not the fault of the leaders of the clergy, in these days, if the whole of this body, with trembling obedience, do not play at this villanous game.\* By their all communicating together, their secret revelations might produce a vast mysterious science, which would arm ecclesiastical policy with a power a hundred times stronger than that of the state can possibly be.

Whatever might be wanting in the confession of the master, would easily be supplied by that of his servants and valets. The association of the Blandines of Lyons, imitated in Brittany, Paris, and elsewhere, would alone be sufficient to throw a light upon the whole household of every family. It is in vain they

\* We know it full well by the loyal priests who have refused to join them.

are known, they are nevertheless employed; for they are gentle and docile, serve their masters very well, and know how to see and listen.

Happy the father of a family who has so virtuous a wife, and such gentle, humble, honest, pious servants. What the ancient sighed for, namely, to live in a glass dwelling, where he might be seen by every one, this happy man enjoys without even the expression of a wish. Not a syllable of his is lost. He may speak lower and lower, but a fine ear has caught every word. If he writes down his secret thoughts, not wishing to utter them, they are read: — by whom? no one knows. What he dreams upon his pillow, the next morning, to his great astonishment, he hears in the street.

## CHAPTER IV.

HABIT. — ITS POWER. — ITS INSENSIBLE BEGINNING. — ITS PROGRESS. — SECOND NATURE. — OFTEN FATAL. — A MAN MAKING THE MOST OF THE POWER OF HABIT. — CAN WE GET CLEAR OF IT?

IF spiritual dominion be really of the spirit, if the empire over thought be obtained by thought itself, by a superiority of character and mind, we must give way; we have only to be resigned. Our family may protest, but it will be in vain.

But, for the most part, this is not the case. The influence we speak of by no means supposes, as an essential condition, the brilliant gifts of the mind. They are doubtless of service to him who has them, though, if we have them in a superior degree, they may possibly do him harm. A brilliant superiority, which ever seems a pretension to govern, puts the minds of others on their guard, warns the less prudent, and places an obstacle on the very threshold; which here is every thing.\* People of mediocrity do not alarm us, they gain an entrance more easily. The weaker they are the less they are suspected; therefore are they the stronger in one sense. Iron clashes against the rock, is blunted, and loses its edge and point. But who would distrust water? Weak, colourless, insipid as it is, if, however, it always continues to fall in the same place, it will in time hollow out the flinty rock.

Stand at this window every day, at a certain hour in the afternoon. You will see a pale man pass down the street, with his eyes cast on the ground, and always following the same line

\* Novelists scarcely ever understand this principle. Most of them begin with an adventure or some surprising action. But this is what startles, warns, and deters us from beginning any. They are prodigal of adventures and actions, and certainly nothing is more likely to awaken the attention, and make fascination impossible. What we say in this chapter on the power of habit will be perhaps little understood by people of fashion, especially in Paris: in a life of so much amusement and variety, they can scarcely imagine the dull uniformity which time may have elsewhere.

of pavement next the houses. Where he set his foot yesterday, there he does to-day, and there he will to-morrow; he would wear out the pavement, if it was never renewed. And by this same street he goes to the same house, ascends to the same story, and in the same cabinet speaks to the same person. He speaks of the same things, and his manner seems the same. The person who listens to him sees no difference between yesterday and to-day:—gentle uniformity, as serene as an infant's sleep, whose breathing raises its chest at equal intervals with the same soft sound.

You think that nothing changes in this monotonous equality; that all these days are the same. You are mistaken; you have *perceived* nothing, yet every day there is a change, slight, it is true, and imperceptible, which the person, himself changed by little and little, does not remark.

It is like a dream in a bark. What distance have you come, whilst you were dreaming? Who can tell? Thus you go on, without seeming to move—still, and yet rapidly. Once out of the river, or canal, you soon find yourself at sea; the uniform immensity in which you now are, will inform you still less of the distance you go. Time and place are equally uncertain; no sure point to occupy attention; and attention itself is gone. The reverie is profound, and becomes more and more so:—an ocean of dreams upon the smooth ocean of waters.

A pleasant state, in which every thing becomes insensible, even gentleness itself. Is it death, or is it life? To distinguish, we require attention, and we should awake from our dream.—No, let it go on, whatever it may be that carries me along with it, whether it lead me to life or death.

Alas! 'tis habit! that gently sloping formidable abyss, into which we slide so easily! we may say every thing that is bad of it, and, also, every thing that is good, and it will be always true.

Let us be frank: if the action that we did in the first instance knowingly and voluntarily, was never done but with will and attention, if it never became habitual and easy, we should act but little and slowly, and our life would pass away in endeavours and efforts. If, for instance, every time we stepped forward we

had to reflect upon our direction, and how to keep our balance, we should not walk much better than the child who is trying to go alone. But walking soon becomes a habit, an action that is performed without any need of invoking the constant and intermediate operation of the will. It is the same with many other acts which, still less voluntary, become at last mechanical, automatical, foreign, as I may say, to our personality. As we advance in life a considerable portion of our activity escapes our notice, removes from the sphere of liberty to enter that of habit, and becomes as it were fated; the remainder, relieved in that respect, and so far absolved from attention and effort, finds itself, by a process of compensation, more free to act elsewhere.

This is useful, but it is also dangerous. The fatal part increases within us, without our interference, and grows in the darkness of our inward nature. What formerly struck our attention, now passes unperceived. What was at first difficult, in time grows easy, too easy: at last we can no longer say even that it is easy, for it takes place, of its own accord, independently of our will; we suffer, if we do not do it. These acts being those, of all others, that cost the least trouble, are incessantly renewed. We must, at last, confess that a second nature is the result, which, formed at the expense of the former, becomes, in a great measure, its substitute. We forget the difficulties of our early beginnings, and fancy we have always been so. This favours at least our idleness, and excuses us from making any efforts to stop ourselves on the brink. Besides, the very traces of the change are at length effaced, the road has disappeared; even though we desire to go back, we could not. It is as though a bridge were broken down behind us; we have passed over it — but for the last time.

We then resign ourselves to our lot, and say, with a faint attempt to smile, "*For me it is a second nature,*" or better still, "*It is my nature.*" So much have we forgotten! But between this nature and our real primitive nature, which we received at our birth, there is a great difference\*; which is, that the latter,

\* This difference is not, as far as I know, pointed out either by Maine de Biran, or by Mr. Felix Ravisson, in his ingenious and profound dissertation on habit.

derived from the bosom of the mother, was like the real mother herself, an attentive guardian of life, that warned us of whatever may compromise it, that sought and found in its benevolence a remedy for our ills. Whereas this second nature, habit, under this perfidious name is often nothing else than the high road that leads to death.

"It is my second nature," says the opium drinker in a sad tone, when he sees dying by his side one who had taken to the deadly beverage only a few months before himself: "I have still so many months to live." "It is my second nature," says a miserable child, a devoted victim of idle and bad habits. Neither reasoning, chastisement, nor maternal grief, is of any avail. They both go, and will go, to the end, following the road by which people travel but once.

A vulgar proverb (but too true in this case) tells us, "*Whoever has once drunk, will drink.*" We must generalise it, and say, "*Whoever has acted, will act; whoever has suffered, will suffer.*" But this is still more true with respect to passive than active habits. Accustomed to let things take their course, to suffer and to enjoy, we become incapable of resuming our activity. At last we do not even require the enticement of pleasure; even when it is no more, and pain usurps its place, inexorable habit pours out still from the same cup: it then no longer takes the trouble to dissemble; we recognise, when too late, how ugly and invincible this tyrant is, who says coldly, "You drank the honey first, now you shall drink the gall, and to the last drop."

If this tyrant, habit, is so strong when it acts blindly, when it is only a thing such as opium or gin, what does it become when it has eyes, a will, *an art*, in a word, when it is a man? A man full of calculation, who knows how to create and cherish habit for his own advantage, a man who for his first means brings against you your belief; who begins personal fascination in the authority of a respected character\*; who, to exercise it over you and create a habit in you, has daily occasions, days, months, years, time, irresistible time, the tamer of all human

\* "Why should one fear to begin with a man (*impossible*) above suspicion?"—Such is their first thought.



things, time, that can eat away iron and brass! Is the heart of woman hard enough to resist it?

A woman? a child! still less, a person *who will be a child*, who employs all the faculties she has acquired since childhood to fall back into childishness, who directs her will to wish no longer, and her thoughts no longer to know any thing, and gives herself up as if asleep.

Suppose her to awake (it is a very rare case), to awake for a moment, (surprising the tyrant without his mask, seeing him as he really is,) and then to wish to escape. Do you think she can? \* To do so, she must act; but she no longer knows what it is, not having acted for so long a time; her limbs are stiff; her legs are paralysed and have lost all motion; her heavy hand rises, falls again, and refuses.

Then you may perceive too well what is habit, and how, once bound in its thousand imperceptible threads, you remain tied in spite of you to what you detest. These threads, though they escape the eye, are, nevertheless, tough; pliable and supple as they seem to be, you may break through one, but underneath you find two; it is a double, nay triple, net. Who can know its thickness?

I read once in an old story what is really touching, and very significant. It was about a woman, a wandering princess, who, after many sufferings, found for her asylum a deserted palace, in the midst of a forest.† She felt happy in reposing there, and remaining some time: she went to and fro from one large empty room to another, without meeting with any obstacle; she thought herself alone and free. All the doors were open. Only at the hall-door, no one having passed through since herself, the spider had woven his web in the sun, a thin, light, and almost invisible network; a feeble obstacle which the princess, who wishes at last to go out, thinks she can remove without any difficulty. She raises the web; but there is another behind it,

\* This reminds one of the adventure of the enchanter Merlin, who, at Viviane's request, lay down in his tomb; but no longer knowing the words that might deliver him, he remains, and will remain there till doomsday.

† A rough wild forest of tufted trees! The very thought of it renews my fears. How did I enter it? I cannot tell; so sleepy was I when I left the true way! — DANTE, *Inferno*.

which she also raises without trouble. The second concealed a third, that she must also raise :—strange ! there are four.—No, five ! or rather six — and more beyond. Alas ! how will she get rid of so many ? She is already tired. No matter ! she perseveres ; by taking breath a little she may continue. But the web continues too ; and is ever renewed with a malicious obstinacy. What is she to do ? She is overcome with fatigue and perspiration, her arms fall by her sides. At last, exhausted as she is, she sits down on the ground, on that insurmountable threshold :—she looks mournfully at the aërial obstacle fluttering in the wind, lightly and triumphantly.—Poor princess ! poor fly ! now you are caught ! But why did you stay in that fairy dwelling, and give the spider time to spin his web ?

## CHAPTER V.

ON CONVENTS. — OMNIPOTENCE OF THE DIRECTOR. — CONDITION OF THE NUN FORLORN AND WATCHED. — CONVENTS THAT ARE AT THE SAME TIME BRIDEWELLS AND BEDLAMS. — INVEIGLING. — BARBAROUS DISCIPLINE. — STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE SUPERIOR NUN AND THE DIRECTOR. — CHANGE OF DIRECTORS. — THE MAGISTRATE.

FIFTEEN years ago I occupied, in a very solitary part of the town, a house, the garden of which was adjacent to that of a convent of women. Though my windows overlooked the greatest part of their garden, I had never seen my sad neighbours. In the month of May, on Rogation-day, I heard numerous weak, very weak voices, chanting prayers, as the procession passed through the convent garden. The singing was sad, dry, unpleasant, their voices false, as if spoiled by sufferings. I thought for a moment they were chanting prayers for the dead; but listening more attentively, I distinguished, on the contrary, "*Te rogamus, audi nos*," the song of hope which invokes the benediction of the God of life upon fruitful nature. This May-song, chanted by these lifeless nuns, offered to me a bitter contrast. To see these pale girls crawling along on the flowery verdant turf, these poor girls, who will never bloom again! — The thought of the middle ages, that had at first flashed across my mind, soon died away: for then, monastic life was connected with a thousand other things; but in our modern harmony what is this but a barbarous contradiction, a false, harsh, grating note? What I then beheld before me was to be defended neither by nature, nor by history. I shut my window again, and sadly resumed my book. This sight had been painful to me, as it was not softened or atoned for by any poetical sentiment. It reminded me much less of chastity than of sterile widowhood, a state of emptiness, inaction, disgust — of an in-

tellectual \* and moral fast, the state in which these unfortunate creatures are kept by their absolute rulers.

We were speaking of habit ; it is certainly there that it reigns a tyrant. Very little art is required to rule over these poor insulated, immured, and dependent women ; as there is no outward influence to counterbalance the impression that one person, ever the same person, makes on them daily. The least skilful priest may easily fascinate their natures, already weakened, and brought down to the most servile, trembling obedience. There is little courage or merit in thus trampling over the creature which is already crushed.

To speak first of the power of habit : nothing of all that we see in the world can give us an idea of the force with which it acts upon this little immured community. Family society, doubtless, modifies us, but its influence is neutralised by outward events. The regularity, with which our favourite newspaper comes every morning with uniform monotony, has certainly some influence ; but this newspaper has its rivals, its opponents. Another influence which exists less in our time, but is still very powerful over secluded persons, is that of a book, the captivating perusal of which may detain us for months and years. Diderot confesses that *Clarissa* was read by him over and over again, and that it was for a long time his very life, his joy, his grief, his summer and winter. But the finest thing of this class is, after all, but a book, a dumb, inanimate thing, which, though you may call it as animated as you please, does not hear, and cannot answer ; it has no words with which it may answer yours, nor eyes to reflect your own.

\* I have already spoken of Sister Mary Lemonnier, persecuted for knowing too well how to write and draw flowers, &c. — “ My confessor,” says she, “ forbade me to gather flowers, and to draw. Unfortunately, walking in the garden with the nuns, there were on the edge of the grass two wild poppies, which, without any intention, I lopped between my fingers, in passing. One of the sisters saw me, and ran to inform the superior nun, who was walking in front, and who immediately came towards me, made me open my hand, and, seeing the poppies, told me that I had done for myself. And the confessor having come the same evening, she accused me before him of disobedience in having gathered flowers. It was in vain I told him that it was done unintentionally, and that they were only wild poppies ; I could not obtain permission to confess myself.” — *Note of Sister Marie Lemonnier*, in *Mr. Tiliard's Mémoire*. The newspapers and the reviews in March, 1845, give extracts from it.

**Away, then, with books, those cold paper images !**

Imagine in a monastery, where nothing else intrudes, the only living object, the only person who has a right to enter, who monopolises all the influences of which we have spoken, who is, in himself, their society, newspaper, novel, and sermon ; a person whose visit is the only interruption to the deadly monotony of a life devoid of employment. Before he comes, and after he has been, is the only division of time, in this life of profound monotony.

We said a person, we ought to have said a man. Whoever will be candid would confess that a woman would never have this influence ; that the circumstance of his being of the opposite sex has much to do with it, even with the purest, and with those who had never dreamed of sex.

To be the only one, without either comparison or contradiction, to be the whole world of a soul, to wean it, at pleasure, from every reminiscence that might cause any rivalry, and efface from this docile heart even the thought of a mother that might still\* be cherished within it ! To inherit every thing, and remain alone and be master of this heart by the extinction of all natural sentiments !

*The only one !* But this is the good, the perfect, the amiable, the beloved ! Enumerate every good quality, and they will all be found to be contained in this one term. A thing

\* It is often from an instinctive tyranny, that the superiors delight in breaking the ties of kindred. "The curate of my parish exhorted me to write to my father, who had just lost my mother. I let advent go by (during which time nuns are not permitted to write letters), and the latter days of the month which are passed in retirement, in the institution, to prepare us for the renewing of our vows, which takes place on new-year's day. But, after the holy term, I hastened to fulfil my duty towards the best of fathers, by addressing to him both my prayers and good wishes, and endeavouring to offer him some consolation in the afflictions and trials with which it had pleased God to visit him. I went to the cell of the superior nun, to beg her to read over my letter, fix the convent seal to it, and send it off ; but she was not there. I therefore put it in my cell upon the table, and went to prayers ; during which time our Reverend Mother the superior, who knew that I had written, because she had sent one of the nuns to see what I was about, beckoned to one of the sisters and bid her go and take my letter. She did so every time I wrote, seven times running, so that my father died, five months afterwards, without ever obtaining a letter from me, which he had so much desired, and had even asked me for, on his deathbed, by the curate of his parish."—*Note of Sister Lemonnier, in Mr. Tiliard's Mémoire. See also the National, March, 1845.*

even (not to say a person), a thing, if it be the only one, will in time captivate our hearts. Charlemagne, seeing from his palace always the same sight, a lake with its verdant border, at last fell in love with it.

Habit certainly contributes much; but also that great necessity of the heart to tell every thing to what we are always in the habit of seeing: whether it be man or thing, we must speak. Even if it were a stone, we should tell it every thing; for our thoughts must be told, and our griefs be poured out from an overflowing heart.

Do you believe that this poor nun is tranquil in this life so monotonous? How many sad, but, alas! too true confessions I could relate here, that have been communicated to me by tender female friends, who had gone and received their tears in their bosom, and returned pierced to the heart to weep with me.

What we must wish for the prisoner is, that her heart, and almost her body, may die. If she be not shattered and crushed into a state of self-oblivion, she will find in the convent the united sufferings of solitude, and of the world. Alone, without being able to be alone!\* Forlorn, yet all her actions watched!

Forlorn! This nun still young, yet already old through abstinence and grief, was yesterday a boarder, a novice whom they caressed. The friendship of the young girls, the maternal flattery of the old, her attachment for this nun, or that confessor, every thing deceived her, and enticed her onward to eternal confinement. We almost always fancy ourselves called to God, when we follow an amiable enchanting person, one who, with that smiling, captivating devotion, delights in this sort of spiritual conquest. As soon as one is gained, she goes to another; but the poor girl who followed her, in the belief that she was loved, is no longer cared for.

Alone, in a solitude without tranquillity of mind, and without repose. How sweet, in comparison with this, would be the

\* The preliminary confession of the nuns to the superior, easily acceded to in the first fit of enthusiasm, soon becomes an intolerable vexation. Even in Madame de Chantal's time, it was much complained of. See her letters, and Fichet, 256.; also Ribadeneira, *Life of St. Theresa*.

solitude of the woods ! The trees would still have compassion ; they are not so insensible as they seem : they hear and they listen.

A woman's heart, that unconquerable maternal instinct, the basis of a woman's character, tries to deceive itself. She will soon find out some young friend, some lively companion, a favourite pupil. Alas ! she will be taken from her. The jealous ones, to find favour with the superiors, never fail to accuse the purest attachments. The devil is jealous, in the interest of God — he makes his objections for the sake of God alone.

What wonder then, if this woman is sad, sadder every day, frequenting the most melancholy-looking avenues, and no longer speaks ? Then her solitude becomes a crime. Now she is pointed out as suspected : they all observe and watch her. In the day-time ? It is not enough. The spy system lasts all night : they watch her sleeping, listen to her when she dreams, and take down her words.

The dreadful feeling of being thus watched night and day must strangely trouble all the powers of the soul. The darkest hallucinations come over her, and all those wicked dreams that her poor reason, when on the point of leaving her, can make in broad daylight and wide awake. You know the visions that Piranesi has engraved : vast subterraneous prisons, deep pits without air, staircases that you ascend for ever without reaching the top, bridges that lead to an abyss, low vaults, narrow passages of catacombs growing closer and closer. In these dreadful prisons, which are punishments, you may perceive, moreover, instruments of torture, wheels, iron collars, whips.

In what, I should like to know, do convents of our time differ from houses of correction and mad-houses ? \* Many convents seem to unite the three characters.

\* Sister Marie Lemonnier was shut up with mad girls : here she found a Carmelite nun, who had been there nine years. The third volume of the *Wandering Jew* contains the real history of Mademoiselle B. She has passed latterly not into a mad-house, but into a convent. Since I have this opportunity of saying a word to our admirable novelist, let him permit me to ask him, why he thought proper to idealise the Jesuits to this extent ? who does not know that certain dignitaries of their order have become immortal by ridicule ? It is difficult to believe stupid writers to be strong minds, or profound machinators. I look in vain for a Rodin, and find only Loricuets.

I know but one difference between them ; whilst the houses of correction are inspected by the law, and the mad-houses by the police, both stop at the convent doors : the law is afraid, and dares not pass the threshold.

The inspection of convents, and the precise designation of their character, are, however, so much more indispensable in these days, as they differ in a very serious point from the convents of the old *régime*.

Those of the last century were properly asylums, where, for a donation once paid, every noble family, whether living as nobles, or rich citizens, placed one or more daughters to make a rich son. Once shut up there, they might live or die as they pleased ; they were no longer cared for. But now *nuns inherit*, they become an object to be gained, a prey for a hundred thousand snares—an easy prey in their state of captivity and dependence. A superior, zealous to enrich her community, has infallible means to force the nun to give up her wealth ; she can a hundred times a day, under pretence of devotion and penitence, humble, vex, and even ill-treat her, till she reduces her to despair. Who can say where asceticism finishes and captation begins, that “ *compelle intrare* ” applied to fortune ? A financial and administrative spirit prevails to such a degree in our convents, that this sort of talent is what they require in a superior before every other. Many of these ladies are excellent managers. One of them is known in Paris by the notaries and lawyers, as able to give them lessons in matters of donations, successions, and wills. Paris need no longer envy Bologna that learned female jurisconsult, who, occasionally wrapped in a veil, professed in the chair of her father.

Our modern laws, which date from the Revolution, and which, in their equity, have determined, that the daughter and younger son should not be without their inheritance, work powerfully in this respect in favour of the counter-revolution ; and that explains the rapid and unheard-of increase of religious houses. Lyons, that in 1789 had only forty convents, has now sixty-three.\* Nothing stops the monastic recruiters, in their

\* I quote from memory the statistical account given by M. Lortet, in 1843.



zeal for the salvation of rich souls. You may see them fluttering about heirs and heiresses. — What a premium for the young peasants who people our seminaries, is this prospect of power! once priests, they may direct fortunes as well as consciences! \* Captation, so suspicious in the busy world, is not so in the convents; though it is here still more dangerous, being exercised over persons immured and dependent. There it reigns unbridled, and is formidable with impunity. For who can know it? Who dares enter here? † No one. Strange! ‡ There are houses in France that are estranged to France. The street is still France; but pass yonder threshold, and you are in a foreign country which laughs at your laws.

What then are their laws? We are ignorant upon the subject. But we know for certain (for no pains are taken to disguise it) that the barbarous discipline of the middle ages is preserved in full force.‡ Cruel contradiction! This system that speaks so much of the distinction of the soul and the body, and believes it, since it boldly exposes the confessor to carnal temptations! Well! this very same system teaches us that the body, distinct from the soul, modifies it by its suffering; that the soul improves and becomes more pure under the lash! § It preaches spiritualism to meet valiantly the seduction of the flesh, and materialism when required to annihilate the will!

What! when the law forbids to strike even our galley-slaves,

\* All these people buy and sell, and become brokers. Prelates speculate in lands and buildings, the Lazarists turn agents for military recruits, &c. The latter, the successors of St. Vincent de Paul, the directors of our Sisters of Charity, have been so blessed by God for their charity, that they have now a capital of twenty millions. Their present chief, Mr. Etienne, then a procurer of the order, was lately the Lazarist agent in a distillery company. The very important law-suit they have at the present moment will decide whether a society engaged by a general, its absolute chief, is freed from every engagement by a change of generals.

† At Sens, a magistrate ventured to enter, and a neo-catholic newspaper regrets they did not throw him out of window.

‡ See the preface to the third edition in this volume.

§ Did not this horrible art calculate well on the influence of the body? this art that does not awaken man's energy by pain, but enervates it by diet, and the misery of dungeons? (See Mabilon's Treatise on Monastic Prisons.) The revelations of the prisoners of Spielberg have enlightened us upon this head.

who are thieves, murderers, the most ferocious of men — you men of grace, who speak only of charity, *the good holy Virgin, and the gentle Jesus*—you strike women!—nay, girls, even children—who, after all, are only guilty of some trifling weakness!

How are these chastisements administered? This is a question, perhaps, still more serious. What sort of terms of composition may not be extorted by fear? At what price does authority sell its indulgence?

Who regulates the number of stripes? Is it you, My Lady Abbess? or you, Father Superior? What must be the capricious partial decision of one woman against another, if the latter displeases her; an ugly woman against a handsome one, or an old one against a young girl! We shudder to think.

A strange struggle often happens between the superior nun and the director. The latter, however hardened he may be, is still a man; it is very difficult for him at last not to be affected for the poor girl, who tells him every thing, and obeys him implicitly. Female authority perceives it instantly, observes him, and follows him closely. He sees his penitent but little, very little, but it is always thought too much. The confession shall last only so many minutes: they wait for him, watch in hand. It would last too long, nay, for ever, without this precaution: to the poor recluse, who received from every one else only insult and ill-treatment, a compassionate confessor is still a welcome refuge.

We have known superiors demand and obtain several times from their bishops a change of confessors, without finding any sufficiently austere. There is ever a wide difference between the harshness of a man and the cruelty of a woman! What is, in your opinion, the most faithful incarnation of the devil in this world? Some inquisitor? Some Jesuit or other? No, a female Jesuit, some great lady, who has been converted, and believes herself born to rule, who among this flock of trembling females acts the Bonaparte, and who, more absolute than the most absolute tyrant, uses the rage of her badly cured passions to torment her unfortunate defenceless sisters.

Far from being the adversary of the confessor in this case, he has my best wishes. Whether he be priest, monk, or Jesuit, I am now on his side. I entreat him to interfere, if he can. In this hell, where the law cannot penetrate, he is the only person who can say a word of humanity. I know very well that this interference will create the strongest and most dangerous attachment. The heart of the poor young creature is wholly given up beforehand to him who defends her.

This priest will be removed, driven away, and ruined, if it be necessary. Nothing is easier to an active influential superior. He dares not venture there, is afraid of disturbance, and retires timidly.\* You will find neither priests nor prelates in these cases mindful of their power, as confessors and spiritual judges; nor will they refuse absolution to the tyrant of the nuns, as Las Casas did to those of the Indians.

There are, fortunately, other judges. The law sleeps, but it still lives.† Some courageous magistrates have been willing to do their duty.‡ No doubt they will be thwarted. But the nights of the guilty have been troubled: they know that every violence which is committed there, every blow given in defiance of the law, is an accusation against them before heaven and earth. *Exsurge, Domine, et judica causam tuam!*

\* I find a confirmation of this in the notes of the nun already quoted. See the preface of this third edition.

† The affairs at Avignon, Sens, and Poitiers, though the guilty parties have been but slightly punished, permit us to hope that the law will at length awake.—We read in one of the newspapers of Caen: “A report was current yesterday at the *palais*, that the *procureur-général* was going to evoke not only the affair of the sequestration of Sister Marie, but also that of Sister Ste-Placide, about whose removal the *avocat-général*, Sorbier, wrote to the under-perfect of Bayeux, on the 13th of August last. Lastly, that of Madmle. H——, of Rouen, whom the attorney-general (*procureur du roi*) of Rouen was obliged to remove from the establishment of Bon-Sauveur.”—*National* (newspaper), March 10. 1845.

‡ The inspection of convents ought to be shared between the judiciary and municipal magistracy, and the administrations of charity. The bar is too much occupied to be able to undertake it alone. If these houses are necessary as asylums for poor women, who dread a too solitary life, at least let them be free asylums like the *béguinages* of Flanders; but not under the same direction.

## CHAPTER VI.

**ABSORPTION OF THE WILL. — GOVERNMENT OF ACTS, THOUGHTS, AND WILLS. — ASSIMILATION. — TRANSHUMANATION. — TO BECOME THE GOD OF ANOTHER. — PRIDE. — PRIDE AND DESIRE.**

If we believe politicians, happiness consists in reigning. They sincerely think so, since they accept in exchange for happiness so much trouble and so many annoyances; a martyrdom often that perhaps the saints would have shrunk from.

But the reign must be real. Are we quite sure that it is really to reign, to make ordinances that are not executed, to enact with great effort, and as a supreme victory, one law more, which is doomed to sleep in the bulletin of laws at the side of thirty thousand of the same kin?

It is of no use to prescribe acts, if we are not first masters of the mind; in order to govern the bodily world, we must reign in the intellectual world. This is the opinion of the thinking man, the profound writer; and he believes he reigns. He is, indeed, a king; at least for the next age. If he is really original, he outsteps his century, and is postponed till another time. But he will reign to-morrow, and the day after, and so on for ages, and ever more absolute. To-day he will be alone; every success costs a friend; but he acquires others; and I am willing to believe both ardent and numerous; those he loses were, no doubt, worth less, but they were those he loved; and he will never see the others. Work, then, disinterested man, work on: you will have, for your reward, a little noise and smoke. Is not that a sufficient reward for you? King of ages yet unborn, you will live and die empty-handed. On the shore of that sea of unknown ages, you, a child, have picked up a shell, which you hold to your ear, to try to catch a faint sound, in which you fancy you hear your own name.

Look on the other hand at that man, that priest, who, at the

very time he is telling us his kingdom is above, has adroitly secured for himself the reality of the earth beneath. He lets you go, as you please,\* in search of unknown worlds; but he himself seizes on the present one; your own world, poor dreamer! that which you loved, the nest where you hoped to come back, and be cherished. Accuse no one but yourself, it is your own fault. With your eyes turned towards the dawn you forgot yourself, whilst you were peeping to catch a glimpse of the first ray of the future. You turn round when it is rather too late; another possesses the cherished casket in which you had left your heart.

The sovereignty of ideas is not that of the will. We can only get possession of the will by the will itself: not general and vague, but an especial and personal will, which attaches itself perseveringly to, and really commands, the person, because it makes it in his own image.

Really to reign, is to reign over a soul. What are all the thrones in comparison to this kingly sway? What is dominion over an unknown crowd? The really ambitious have been too shrewd to make a mistake? They have not exhausted their efforts in the extension of a vague and weak power, which loses by being extended; they have aimed rather at its solidity, intensity, and immutable possession.

The end thus settled, the priest has a great advantage which no one else possesses. His business is with a soul *which gives itself up of its own accord*. The great obstacle for other powers is, that they do not well know the person acted upon; they see only the outside\*, but the priest looks within.

Whether he be clever, or only of an ordinary stamp, still, by the sole virtue of hopes and fears, by that magic key which opens the world to come, the priest opens also the heart, and that heart wishes to lay itself open; all its fear is lest it should conceal any thing. It does not see itself entirely; but whenever it is at a loss, the priest sees his way clearly, and penetrates into it, by the simple method of obtaining revelations

\* Confession, even incomplete, as when made before a judge, enlightens greatly the moralists, and the painter of manners. Walter Scott was a *grefier*, and Fielding a justice of the peace.

from servants, friends, and relatives, and comparing them together. With all this enlightening he forms a mass of light, which, concentrated upon the object, renders it so thoroughly luminous, that he knows not only its present existence, but its future state, deciphering, from the very first day, in its instinct and sentiment, what will be its thoughts on the morrow. He, therefore, truly knows this heart, both by sight and foresight. This rare science would remain inexplicable without a word in explanation. If it knows its subject to this degree, it is because it is its own work. The director creates the directed ; the latter is his work, and becomes in time one and the same man. How is it possible the former should not know the ideas and wishes, which he himself has inspired, and which are his own ? A transfusion takes place between the two in this incessant action, in which the inferior, receiving every thing from the other\*, goes on gradually losing his personality. Growing weaker and more idle every day, he thinks himself happy in no longer having a will of his own, and is glad to see that troublesome will, which has caused too many sufferings, die away and be lost. Even so a wounded man sees his blood, his life-blood, flowing away, and feels himself the easier.

But who is to make good within you, and fill up the void left by this draining away of moral personality, by which you escape from yourself ? — In two letters — *he*.

He, the patient cunning man, who, day by day, taking from you a little of yourself, and substituting a little of himself, has gently subtilised the one, and put the other in its place. The soft and weak nature of women, almost as yielding as that of children, is well adapted for this transfusion. The same woman, seeing ever the same man, takes, without knowing it, his turn of mind, his accent, his language, nay more, something of his gait and physiognomy. She speaks as he does, and walks in the same manner as he. In only seeing her pass by, a person of any penetration would see that *she is he*.

\* He receives especially from the other whatever is bad in him—his negative, exclusive, hateful, hard, and harsh qualities. We perceive something of this in the sad and unpleasant picture attributed to Zurbaran : a man of copper raising his hand over two women of lead. (The St. Dominic in the Louvre, Standish Collection.)

But this outward similarity is but a weak sign of the profound change within. What has been transformed is the intimate, most intimate part. A great mystery has been effected, that which Dante calls *transhumanation*; when a human person, melting away without knowing it, has assumed (substance for substance) another humanity; when the superior replacing the inferior, the agent the patient, no longer needs to direct him, but becomes his being. *He* is, the other is not; unless we consider him as an accident, a quality of this being, a pure phenomenon, an empty shadow, a nothing.

• Why did we just now speak of influence, dominion, and royalty? This is a much higher thing than royalty — this is divinity. It is to be the god of another.

If there be in this world an occasion on which we may become mad, it is this. The thought of the man who has reached this point, in whatever humility he may cloak himself, is that of the pagan: “*Deus factus sum!*” I was man, I am God!

More than God. He will say to his creature, “God had created you so, and I have made you another person; so that, being no longer his, but mine, you are myself, my inferior self, who are only to be distinguished from myself by your adoring me.”

Dependent creature, how could you have helped yielding? — God yields to my word when I make him descend to the altar. Christ becomes humble and docile, and comes down at my hour, at my sign, to take the place of the bread that is no more.\*

We are no longer surprised at the furious pride of the priest, who, in his royalty of Rome, has often carried it to greater extremes than all the follies of the emperors, making him

\* “Origen thinks that the priest must be a little God, to do an act that is beyond the power of angels.” Father Fichet (a Jesuit), “*Life of Madame de Chantal*,” p. 615. If you require a more serious Jesuit than Fichet, here is Bourdaloue: “Though the priest be in this sacrifice only the substitute of Jesus Christ, it is nevertheless certain, that Jesus Christ submits to him, that he becomes his subject, and renders him, every day upon our altars, the most prompt and exact obedience. If faith did not teach us these truths, could we think that a man could ever attain to such an elevation, and be invested with a character that enables him, if I may say so, to command his sovereign Lord, and make him descend from heaven?”

despise not only men and things, but his own oath, and the word, which he gave as infallible. Every priest being able to make God, can just as well make odd even, or things done things undone, things said things unsaid. The angel is afraid of so much power, and stands back respectfully before this man to see him pass.\*

Go, boast to me now of your privations and mortifications! I am indeed much touched by them! — Do you think, then, that through that plain robe and meagre body, ay, in that pale heart, I do not see the deep, exquisite, and maddening enjoyment of pride, which composes the very being of a priest? What he carries within his robe, and broods over so jealously, is a treasure of terrific pride. His hands tremble with it: a bright ray of delight gleams in his downcast eyes.

Oh! with what fervour he hates every thing that is an obstacle to him, every thing that prevents his infinity from being indeed infinite! How does he desire with all his infinite heart to annihilate it! Oh! how diabolical it is to hate in God!

A great suffering is connected with this great enjoyment of being the god of another soul: all that is wanting to complete this divinity causes horrible pangs. You cannot be surprised if this man pursues with an insatiable ardour the absorption of a soul which he hopes to assimilate. You may easily understand the real and profound cause of this strange avidity, which wants to see and know every thing, both the trivial and the important, the principal and the accessory, the essential and the indifferent, and which, not satisfied with enveloping it outwardly, tries to reach the bottom, and probing lower and lower in the very depth, would attain the essence. Suppose even this to be reached, still it will cry out for — more! Alas! it

\* One of the new priests, under the orders of St. François de Sales, often saw his guardian angel. Having arrived at the church-door, he stopped. They asked him the reason: he answered ingenuously, that “he was accustomed to see his guardian angel walk before him, and that this prince of heaven had then stopped and stood aside, out of respect for his character, giving him the precedence.” Maupas du Tour, *Life of St. François de Sales*, p. 199. Molinos says boldly (*Guida*, lib. ii. c. 1.), “If God had given angels to guide men, they might have been blinded by the demons, who disguise themselves as angels of light. Happily,” &c.



may ever acquire more, and again more ; but something will ever remain beyond. Who can measure a soul ? It preserves in its recesses, unknown to itself (and to you also), both space and depth. That soul which seemed to you already acquired, and which you thought in your entire possession, hides behind it, perhaps, a world of liberty which you can never reach.

This is humiliating, gloomy, nay, almost despair. Horrible suffering ! not to have all, is, for a god, to have nothing.

Then, even then, in their very pride, an ironical voice is heard, scoffing at their pride ; it is the voice of desire, which it had silenced till now : "Poor god," says she, "you are no god ; it is your own fault ; I told you so before. Come, leave off your school-divinity, and your *distinguo* of the corporeal and spiritual natures. To possess, is to have all. He alone has possession who can both use and abuse. For the soul to be really thine, one thing is still wanting — the body."

## CHAPTER VII.

DESIRE. — ABSORPTION AND ASSIMILATION CONTINUED. — TERRORS OF THE OTHER WORLD. — THE PHYSICIAN AND THE PATIENT. — ALTERNATIVES. — POSTPONEMENTS. — THE EFFECTS OF FEAR IN LOVE. — TO BE ALL-POWERFUL AND ABSTAIN. — STRUGGLES BETWEEN THE SPIRIT AND THE FLESH. — MORAL DEATH MORE POTENT THAN PHYSICAL LIFE. — IT CANNOT REVIVE.

LET us pause a moment at the brink of the abyss that we have just had a glimpse of, and before we descend into it, let us know well where we are.

The unlimited dominion, of which we spoke just now, could never be sufficiently explained by the power of habit, strengthened by all the arts of seduction and captation; it would be especially impossible to understand how so many inferior men succeed in obtaining their ends. We must repeat here what we have said elsewhere: *If this power of death has so much hold upon the soul, the reason is, that it generally attacks it in its dying state*; when weakened by worldly passions, and crushing it more and more by the ebb and flow of religious passions, it finds at last that it has neither strength, nor nerve, nor any thing that can offer resistance.

Which of us has not known, in his life, those moments when violent activity having ruffled our hearts, we hate action, liberty, and ourselves? — when the wave that bore us upon its gentle but treacherous bosom retires suddenly and harshly from beneath, leaving us upon the dry strand — where we remain like a log? Never could the soul, thus stranded, be set in motion again, if it were not, independently of its will, floated off by the waves of Lethé. A low voice then says, “Move not; act no more, do not even wish; die in will.” — “Happy release! wish for me! There, I give up to you that troublesome liberty, the weight of which oppressed me so much. A soft pillow of faith, a childish obedience is all I now want. Now I shall sleep happily!”

But such people do not sleep, they only dream. How can they, nervous and trembling with weakness, expect to repose? They lie still, it is true; but they are also plunged in dreams. The soul will not act, but the imagination acts without her; and this involuntary fluctuation is but the more fatiguing. Then, all the terrors of childhood crowd upon the patient, and more steadfastly than they did upon the child. The phantasmagoria of the middle ages, which we thought forgotten, revives; the dark infernal region of hell, which we had laughed away, exacts a heavy interest, and takes a cruel revenge: this poor soul belongs to it. What would become of her, alas! had she not a spiritual physician at her bedside to succour and encourage her? "Do not leave me, I am too much afraid!"—"Do not fear; you are not responsible for all this: God will pardon you these disordered emotions; they are not yours; the devil stirs thus within us."—"The devil! ah! I felt him; I thought, indeed, this violent and strange emotion was foreign to me. But how horrible to be the sport of the malignant spirit!"—"I am here; be not afraid; hold me fast; go straight on; the abyss, it is true, is gaping wide, on the right and on the left; but, by following the narrow bridge, with God's assistance, we shall walk along this razor-edge to Paradise."

Great, indeed, is the power to be so necessary, ever called and desired! to hold, as it were, the two threads of hope and fear, which drag the soul at pleasure. When troubled, they calm her; when calm, they agitate her; she grows more and more feeble, and the physician is so much the stronger; he perceives it, and he enjoys it. He, to whom every natural enjoyment is forbidden, feels a gloomy happiness, a mawkish sensuality, in exercising this power; making the ebb and the flow, afflicting in order to console, wounding, healing, and wounding again. "Oh! let her be ill for ever! I suffer, let her suffer with me. It is at least something to have pain in common."

But they do not gather these sighs, and support the languid head with impunity. He who wounded, is wounded in his turn. In these outpourings of the heart, the most simple person often says, without knowing it, things that inflame the passions. He draws back, as if indignant and angry, before the scorching

flame that a gentle hand has applied without being aware of it: he endeavours to conceal his emotion under a well-feigned pious anger; he tries to hate sin, but he only envies it.

How gloomy he seems that day! See him ascend the pulpit. What ails this holy man of God? People see too plainly; it is the zeal of the law that devours him — he bears all the sins of the people. What thunder and lightning in his discourse! is it the last judgment? every one flinches. One woman, however, has received the whole force of the thundering denunciation; she grows pale, her knees no longer support her; the blow struck home: for he who knows her inmost soul found too easily the terrible word, the only word that could strike and touch her to the quick. She alone felt it; she finds herself now alone in the church (the crowd no longer exists for her), and alone she sees herself falling into the infernal dark abyss. "Father, reach me your hand! I feel I am sinking!"

Not yet, it is not yet time! She must struggle and fall still lower, then rise a little to sink lower still. Now, she comes to him every day more grieving, and more pressing. How she prays and insists! But she will not yet get the comforting word: "To-day? no, on Saturday." And on Saturday he puts her off till Wednesday.\* What! three days and three whole nights in the same anxiety? She weeps like a child. No matter; he resists and leaves her, but he is troubled even in resisting her. In thus humbling this *belle madame*, he tastes a secret pleasure of pride; and yet he thinks himself that he has been too harsh towards her: he loves her, and he has made her weep!

Cruel man! do you not see that the poor woman is dying? that she is becoming weaker at every burst of grief? What is it you want? her downfall? But in this prostration of strength, in this terror of despair and abandonment of dignity, is there not already a complete downfall? No; what he wants till now, is, that she may suffer as he does, resemble him in

\* This postponing manœuvre is admirably calculated to draw from a woman a secret, that does not belong to confession, that she will not tell, — her husband's secret, her lover's *real name*, &c. &c. They always get it out of her at last.

sufferings, and be his partner in his woes and frenzy. He is alone; then let her be alone. He has no family; he hates her as a wife and mother; he wants to make her a lover, a lover of God: he is deceiving himself in deceiving her.

But in the midst of all this, and fascinated as she is, she is not, however, so blind as you might believe. Women, even children, are penetrating when they are afraid; they very soon get a glimpse of what may comfort them. This woman, whilst she was dragged at his feet as a frightened yet caressing suppliant, did not fail to notice, through her tears, the emotion she excited. They were both in emotion together — this is to be an accomplice. They both know (without, however, knowing it clearly, but confusedly through instinct and passion,) that they have a hold upon each other, she by desire, and he by fear.

Fear has much to do with love. The husband in the middle ages was loved by the wife for his very severity. His humble Griselda recognised in him the right of the paternal rod. The bride of William the Conqueror, having been beaten by him, knew him by this token for her lord and husband. Who has this right in our age? The husband has not preserved it — the priest has it and uses it: he ever holds over woman the rod of authority; he beats her submissive and docile with spiritual rods. But he who can punish, can also pardon; the only one who can be severe, he alone has also what with a timid person is accounted supreme grace — clemency. One word of pardon gains for him instantly, in that poor frightened heart, more than the most worthy would obtain after years of perseverance. Kindness acts just in proportion to the severities and terrors that have preceded it. No seduction is comparable to this.

How can that man be resisted, who, to force one to love him, can entice by the offer of Paradise, or frighten by the terrors of hell? This unexpected return of kindness is a very dangerous moment for her, who, conquered by fear, with her forehead in the dust, expects only the fury of the thunderbolt. What! that formidable judge, that angel of judgment, is suddenly melted! She, who felt already the cold blade of the sword, feels now the warmth of a kind friendly hand, which raises her from the earth. The transition is too great for her; she had

still held up against fear, but this kindness overcomes her. Worn out by her alternate hopes and fears, the feeble person becomes weakness itself.

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To be able to have all, and then abstain, is a slippery situation! who will keep his footing on this declivity?

Here we find again, in the path of desire, the very point at which we had just now arrived by the path of pride.

Desire, despised at first by pride, as brutal and coarse, turns sophist, and puts before him the terrible problem at which love, mingled with dread, flinches, and turns away his sight. He sees without daring to look, he puts up his hand before his eyes, but with his fingers apart, like the Vergognosa of the Campo-Santo.

“Are you sure you possess the heart entirely, if you have not the body? Will not physical possession give up corners of the soul, which otherwise would remain inaccessible? Is spiritual dominion complete, if it does not comprehend the other? The great popes seem to have settled the question: they thought popedom implied empire; and the pope himself, besides his sway over consciences, was king in temporal matters.”

Against this sophism of the flesh, the spirit still struggles, and does not fail to answer, “That spiritual conquest, as soon as it is completed in this manner, ceases to be spiritual; that this ambitious conqueror, the spirit, cannot have all without perishing at the moment of victory.”

The flesh is not embarrassed; but taking refuge in hypocrisy, makes itself of no importance, and becomes humble to regain its advantage: “Is then the body so important that we should trouble our heads about it? A simple dependent of the soul ought to follow wherever she goes.” The mystics are never behindhand, in this matter, in their insults to the body and the flesh. The flesh is the brute animal, says one, which we must cudgel. “Let her pass,” says another, “through any muddy brook: what does it signify to the soul that rides above, sublime and pure, without deigning to look down?”

Afterwards comes the vile refinement of the Quietists: “If the inferior part be without sin, the superior grows proud, and

pride is the greatest sin : consequently the flesh ought to sin, in order that the soul may remain humble ; sin, producing humility, becomes a ladder to ascend to heaven."

"Sin! — But is it sin? (depraved devotion finds here the ancient sophism :) *The holy by its essence*, being holiness itself, *always sanctifies*. In the spiritual man, every thing is spirit, even what in another is matter. If, in its superior flight, the holy should meet with any obstacle that might draw it again towards the earth, let the inferior part get rid of it ; it does a meritorious work, and is sanctified for it."

Diabolical subtlety! which few avow clearly, but which many brood over, and cherish in their most secret thoughts. Molinos is forgotten, but Molinosism still exists.\*

\* This word Molinosism reminds us of an old forgotten system. In practice, it is a thing of all times, an instinct, a blind belief, which is natural to the weak, and which may be thus expressed:— with the strong, every thing is right; a saint cannot sin. See the patient, if he is lucky enough to invite his physician to dinner with him: he has recovered his assurance and boldness, and indulges in every dish without being afraid. I believe, moreover, that real Molinosism is always a powerful argument with the simple. A contemporary writer, Llorente, relates (t. iii. ch. 28. article 2. ed. 1817), that when he was secretary to the Inquisition, they brought before that tribunal a capuchin friar, who was director of a community of Béguines, nearly all of whom he had seduced, by persuading them that they were not straying from the road to perfection. He would say to each of them, at the confessional, that he had received a singular grace from God: "Our Lord," said he, "has deigned to appear to me in the consecrated wafer, and he has said to me, almost all the souls that you direct here are pleasant to me, but especially such a one (*the capuchin named the one he was then speaking to*). She is already so perfect that she has overcome every passion, save desire, which is her torment. For this reason, wishing her virtue to be rewarded and that she should serve me with a quiet mind, I charge you to give her dispensation, but in favour of you; she is to speak of it to no confessor; it would be useless, since with such dispensation she cannot sin." Out of seventeen Béguines, of which the community was composed, this daring capuchin gave dispensation to thirteen, who were discreet for a considerable time; one of them, however, fell ill, expected to die, and revealed all, declaring that she had never been able to believe in the dispensation, but that she had availed herself of it. If the accused party had simply confessed, he would have been let off with a very trifling punishment, the Inquisition being, says Llorente, very lenient towards that kind of offence. But, though he confessed the thing, he maintained that he had acted properly, being empowered by Jesus Christ. "What!" said they, "is it likely that our Lord appeared to you, to exempt you from a precept of the Decalogue." "Why, he exempted Abraham from the fifth\* commandment, ordering him to kill his son, and the Hebrews from the seventh\*,

\* It will be remembered that a Roman Catholic is speaking; a Protestant would have said the sixth and eighth commandments respectively. — TRANSL.

Besides, false reasonings are hardly necessary in the miserable state of dreaming in which a soul lives, when deprived of will and reason.

Beside herself, and out of her senses, having lost all connection with reality, ever buried in miracles, intoxicated with God, and the devil, she is weakened to death : but the excess of this weakness is yet strong enough to give poison and fever in return ; terrible contagion — you thought that this morally dead person would toil after you, but it is you who will follow her : she will bear away the living.

Here end the subtleties with which desire had been satisfied. A horrible light breaks upon them, and sophistry finds no longer any clouds to darken it. You see then, when it is too late, that you have done more than you wanted. You have destroyed precisely what would have served you ; for each of these suppressed powers, the will, the mind, and the heart, which now are no more, would have been for you, had they remained alive. But, alas ! they are crushed, faded, and void.

ordering them to rob the Egyptians.” “Yes, but these were mysteries favourable to religion.” “And what then is more favourable to religion than to quiet thirteen virtuous souls, and lead them to a perfect union with the divine essence?” I recollect, says Llorente, saying to him, “But, father, is it not surprising that this singular virtue happened to be precisely in the thirteen young and handsome ones, and never in the four others who were ugly or old?” He replied coldly, “The Holy Spirit inspires as it pleases.”

The same author, in the same chapter, though reproaching the Protestants with having exaggerated the corruption of the confessors, avows, “In the sixteenth century, the Inquisition had imposed upon women the obligation of denouncing guilty confessors, but the denunciations were found to be so numerous, that the penitents were declared to be relieved from denouncing.” Trials of this description were conducted with closed doors, and condemnations were hushed up in secret little *autodafés*. From the number of trials which Llorente extracts from the registers, he compares the morals of the different religious orders, and finds, in figures, a very natural result that might be guessed without the help of arithmetic. They deceived their penitents, just in proportion to the more or less money and liberty they had to seduce others with. Poor and secluded monks were dangerous confessors ; friars, who had more liberty, and secular priests, seldom made use of the hazardous means of the confessional ; because they found favourable opportunities elsewhere. They who, as directors, see women *tête-à-tête* at home, or in their own houses, have no need to corrupt them at the altar.



The essence of existence once destroyed, no longer feels ; it can neither attach itself to any thing, nor be captivated by any thing. You wanted to bind it fast, but you have stifled it. Now you would wish her, whose life is annihilated, to be alive, or at least to revive. That is a miracle beyond your power. The thing you see, is, and ever will be, a cold shadow, without any life to answer you. Do what you will, you will find no responsive throbbing. This will be your despair. You can feign every thing, and say every thing, except one word, which we defy you to pronounce without grief — the sacred name of love.

Love ! why, you have assassinated it ! In order to love, you must have a person ; but what was a person you have made a thing.

Proud man ! you who every day summon your Creator to descend upon the altar, you have inverted the order of creation : you have destroyed a being.

You, who, out of a grain of corn, can make a god, tell me, was it not also a god that you held just now in that credulous and docile soul ? what have you done with that interior god of man, that we call liberty ? You have put yourself in its place ; in the place of that power, by which man is man, I see nonentity.

Well ! that nonentity shall be your torment. You will probe it in vain ; however low you penetrate, you will find but a void, nothing, neither *will* nor *power*. There every thing that could have loved has perished.

## PART III.

## FAMILIES.

## CHAPTER I.

SCHISM IN FAMILIES. — THE DAUGHTER ; — BY WHOM EDUCATED. — IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION, AND THE ADVANTAGE OF THE FIRST INSTRUCTOR. — INFLUENCE OF PRIESTS UPON MARRIAGE, WHICH THEY OFTEN RETAIN AFTER THAT CEREMONY.

THE drama which I have endeavoured to sketch does not always, thanks be to God, go so far as the annihilation of the will and personality. One cannot well discern where it stops, owing to the dark cloak of reserve, discretion, and hypocrisy, with which this black community is enveloped. Besides, the clergy have been doubly guarded in their conduct during the present contentions.\* It is out of the church, in houses, and family circles, that we must seek for what will throw the principal light upon what the Church conceals. Look well ; there you see a reflection, unfortunately too clear, of what is passing elsewhere.

We have already said, if you enter a house in the evening, and sit down at the family table, one thing will almost always strike you ; the mother and daughters are together, of one and the same opinion, on one side ; whilst the father is on the other, and alone.

What does this mean ? It means that there is some one more at this table, whom you do not see, to contradict and give the lie to whatever the father may utter. He returns fatigued with the cares of the day, and full of those which are

\* This circumspection would bear carrying a little farther, if we are to judge of it by the public adventures of the Abbés C. and N., who, by-the-by, will not prosper the less on this account, as two others, of high rank, and known to everybody, have already shown.

to come ; but he finds at home, instead of repose and comfort for the mind, only the struggle with the past.

We must not be surprised at it. By whom are our daughters and wives brought up ? We must repeat the expression,—by our enemies, the enemies of the Revolution, and of the future.

Do not cry out here, nor quote me this or that sermon you have preached.

What do I care for the democratical parade which you make in the pulpit, if every thing beneath us, and behind us, all your little pamphlets which issue by thousands and millions, your ill-disguised system of instruction, your confessional, the spirit of which now transpires, show us altogether what you are,—the enemies of liberty ? You, subjects of a foreign prince ; you, who deny the French church, how dare you speak of France ?

Six hundred and twenty thousand \* girls are brought up by nuns under the direction of the priests. These girls will soon be women and mothers, who, in their turn, will hand over to the priests, as far as they are able, both their sons and their daughters.

The mother has already succeeded as far as concerns the daughter ; by her persevering importunity, she has, at length, overcome the father's repugnance. A man who, every evening, after the troubles of business, and the warfare of the world, finds strife also at home, may certainly resist for a time, but he must necessarily give in at last ; or he will be allowed neither truce, cessation, rest, nor refuge. His own house becomes uninhabitable. His wife having nothing to expect at the confessional but harsh treatment, as long as she does not succeed, will wage against him every day and every hour the war they make against her ; a gentle one, perhaps ; politely bitter, implacable, and obstinate.

She grumbles at the fire-side, is low-spirited at table, and never opens her mouth either to speak or eat ; then at bedtime, the inevitable repetition of the lesson she has learned, even on the pillow. The same sound of the same bell, for ever and ever ; who could withstand it ? what is to be done ? Give in, or become mad !

\* M. Louandre gives the figure six hundred and twenty-two thousand girls, in his conscientious statistics. — *Revue des Deux-Mondes*, 1844.

If the husband were firm, obstinate, and persevering enough to stand this trial, the wife, perhaps, would not resist. "How can I see her so unhappy, pining, uneasy, and ill? She is evidently growing thinner. I had much rather save my wife." Such is the language of the husband. If he be not subdued by his wife, he is by his own heart. The next day, the son leaves his college for the *Christian college*, or the school for the little seminary. The daughter is led triumphantly by her mother to the excellent boarding-school close by, where the good abbé confesses and directs. In less than a year, the boarding-school is found to be not quite good enough, being still too worldly; the little girl is then given over to the nuns, whose superior our abbé happens to be, in some convent of his, that is, under his protection, and his lock and key.

Good-humoured parent, lie easy, and sleep sound. Your daughter is in good hands; you shall be contradicted till your death. Your daughter is really a girl of good sense; and on every subject, having been carefully armed against you, will take, whatever you may say, the opposite side of the question.

What is very singular, the father, generally, is aware that they are bringing up his child against him. Man, you surprise me; what do you expect then? "Oh! she will forget it; time, marriage, and the world will wear away all that." Yes, for a time, but only to re-appear; at the first disappointment in the world, it will all return. As soon as she grows somewhat in years, she will return to the habits of the child; the master she now has will be her master then, whether for your contradiction, good man, or for the despair and daily damnation of her father and husband. Then will you taste the fruit of this education.

Education! a mere trifle, a weak power, no doubt, which the father may, without danger, allow his enemies to take possession of!

To possess the mind, with all the advantage of the first possessor! To write in this book of blank paper whatever they will! and to write what will last for ever! For, remember well, it will be in vain for you to write upon it hereafter; what has once been indited, cannot be erased.\* It is the mystery of her young memory to be as weak in receiving impressions, as it is

strong in keeping them. The early tracing that seemed to be effaced at twenty re-appears at forty or sixty. It is the last and the clearest, perhaps, that old age will retain.

What! will not reading, and the press, the great overruling power of our own days, give a stronger education than the former one? "Do not rely on this. The influence of the press partly annuls itself; it has a thousand voices to speak, and a thousand others to answer and destroy what it has said. Education does not make so much noise; it does not talk; it reigns. Look, in that little class, without witness, control, or contradiction, a man is speaking; he is master, an absolute master, invested with the most ample power to punish and chastise. His voice, not his hand, has the power of a rod; the little, trembling, and believing creature, who has just left her mother's apron, receives his weighty words, which enter the soft tablet of her memory, and stick into it, like so many nails of iron.

This is true in speaking of the school, but how much more so as regards the church! especially in the case of the daughter, who is more docile and timid, and certainly retains more faithfully her early impressions. What she heard the first time in that grand church, under those resounding roofs, and the words, pronounced with a solemn voice by that man in black, which then frightened her so, being addressed to *herself*; — ah! be not afraid of her ever forgetting them. But even if she could forget them, she would be reminded of them every week: woman is all her life at school\*, finding in the confessional her school-bench, her schoolmaster, the only man she fears, and the only one, as we have said, who, in the present state of our manners, can threaten a woman.

What an advantage has he in being able to take her quite young, in the convent where they have placed her, to be the first to take in hand her young soul, and to be the first to exercise upon her the earliest severity, and also the earliest indulgence which is so akin to affectionate tenderness†, to be

\* Especially with the *catechisms of perseverance*, Month of Mary, &c. which keep girls under the hand of the priest.

† What is direction generally? — 1st, *Lore before love*; it cultivates in the little girl that power which is now awakening, and it cultivates it so well, that on leaving the convent, her parents see the necessity of a speedy

the father and friend of a child taken so soon from her mother's arms. The confidant of her first thoughts will long be associated with her private reveries. He has had an especial and singular privilege which the husband may envy: what?—why, the virginity of the soul, and the first-fruits of the will.

This is the man of whom, young bachelors, you must ask the girl in marriage, before you speak to her parents. Do not deceive yourselves, or you will lose all chance. You shake your heads, proud children of the age; you think you can never be induced to humble yourselves so far. All I hope then is, that you may be able to live single, and wed philosophy; otherwise, I can see you, even now, in spite of all your fine speeches, gliding stealthily, sneaking by twilight into the church, and kneeling down before the priest. There they were lying in wait for you, and there they catch you. You had not foreseen it. Now you are a lover, poor young man, and will do whatever they wish.

I only wish that this girl, bought so dearly, may be really yours.\* But what with that mother and that priest, the same influence, though diminished for a moment, will soon resume its strength. You will have a wife, *minus* heart and soul, and you will understand, when it is too late, that he who now gives her away knows well how to keep her.†

marriage to support her, for she is in danger of falling:—2dly, *Lore after loves*. An aged female is, in a layman's estimation, an *old* woman: but according to the priest's, she is a *woman*: the priest begins where the world ends.

\* For the moral weakness of women brought up in convents, for the precarious state of the family, and the miserable and insulated condition of the husband, read Sismondi's *Républiques italiennes*, xvi 222, 227., and especially 450.

† Let us add to this chapter a fact, which (being compared with what we have said about ecclesiastical discipline) inclines us to think, that the clergy do not lose sight of the girls who are brought up in the convents under their direction. A friend of mine, whose high position and character render his testimony very important, lately told me, that having placed a young relation of his in a convent, he had heard from the nuns, *that they sent to Rome* the names of the pupils who distinguished themselves the most. The centralisation of such private information, about the daughters of the leading families of the Catholic world, must indeed facilitate many combinations, and be of especial service to Ultramontane politics. The Jesù, if it were so, would be a vast marriage office.

## CHAPTER II.

WOMAN. — THE HUSBAND DOES NOT CONSOCIATE WITH HIS WIFE. — HE SELDOM KNOWS HOW TO INITIATE HER INTO HIS THOUGHTS. — WHAT MUTUAL INITIATION WOULD BE. — THE WIFE CONSOLES HERSELF WITH HER SON. — HE IS TAKEN FROM HER. — HER LONELINESS AND ENNUI — A PIOUS YOUNG MAN. — THE *SPIRITUAL* AND THE *WORLDLY* MAN. — WHICH OF THE TWO IS NOW THE MORTIFIED MAN.

MARRIAGE gives the husband a single and momentary opportunity to become in reality the master of his wife, to withdraw her from the influence of another, and make her his own for ever. Does he profit by it? very rarely. He ought, in the very beginning, when he has much influence over her, to let her participate in the activity of his mind, his business, and ideas, initiate her in his projects, and create an activity in her by means of his own.

To wish and think as he does, both acting with him and suffering with him — this is marriage. The worst that may happen is not that she may suffer, but that she may languish and pine away, living apart, and like a widow. How can we wonder, then, if her affection for him be lessened? Ah! if, in the beginning, he made her his own, by making her share his ambition, troubles, and uneasiness: — if they had watched whole nights together, and been troubled with the same thoughts, he would have retained her affections. Attachment may be strengthened by grief itself; and mutual sufferings may maintain mutual love.

Frenchwomen are superior to those of England or Germany, and, indeed, to any other women, in being able not only to assist man, but to become his companion, his friend, his partner, his *alter ego*. None but the commercial classes, generally speaking, are wise enough to profit by this. See, in the shop-keeping quarters, in the dark storehouses of the *Rue des Lombards*, or the *Rue de la Verrerie*, the young wife, often born of

rich parents, who nevertheless remains there, in that little glazed counting-house, keeping the books, registering whatever is brought in or taken out, and directing the clerks and porters. With such a partner, the house will prosper. The household is improved by it. The husband and wife, separated by their occupations during the day, are the better pleased to unite together in common thought.

Without being able to participate so directly in the husband's activity, the wife might also, in other professions, be able to associate with him in his business, or at least in his ideas. What makes this difficult (I have not attempted to disguise it), is the spirit of specialty which goes on increasing in our different professions, as well as in our sciences, and driving us into minute details; whereas woman, being less persevering, and, moreover, less called upon to apply herself with precision, is confined to a knowledge of generalities. The man who will seriously initiate a woman into his own life, can do it safely and completely, if she love him, but he would require to possess both patience and kindness. They have come together, as it were, from the two opposite poles, and prepared by a totally different education. Since it is so, how can you expect that your young wife, intelligent as she is, should understand you at once? If she do not understand you, it is too frequently your own fault: this almost always proceeds from the abstract, dry, and scholastic forms which you have imbibed from your education. She, remaining in the sphere of common sense and sentiment, understands nothing of your formulas, and seldom, very seldom indeed, do you know how to translate them into plain language. This requires address, will, and feeling. You would want, sir, let me tell you, both more sense, and more love.

At the first word she does not understand, the husband loses his patience. "She is incapable, she is too frivolous." He leaves her, and all is over. But that day he loses much. If he had persevered, he would gradually have led her along with him; she would have lived his life, and their marriage would have been real. Ah! what a companion he has lost! how sure a confidant! and how zealous an ally! In this person, who, when left to herself, seems to him too trifling, he would have



found in moments of difficulty a ray of inspiration, and often useful advice.

I am here entering upon a large subject, where I should wish to stop. But I cannot. One word more : the man of modern times, a victim of the division of work, and often condemned to a narrow specialty, in which he loses the sentiment of general life, and becomes a morbid sort of a being, would require to have with him a young and serene mind, more nicely balanced, and less given to specialty than his own, that might lead him from the confined notions of trade, and restore him to the charms of a well-regulated mind. In this age of eager opposition, when the day is taken up with active business, and we return home worn out with toil or disappointment, it is necessary to have a wife at the domestic fire-side to refresh the burning brain of the husband. This workman, (what are we all but workmen, each in his own particular line?) this blacksmith, panting with thirst, after beating the iron, would receive from her the living fountain of the beautiful and good, of God and nature ; he would drink for a moment of eternal streams. Then he would *forget*, take courage, and breathe freely again. Having been relieved by her, he would in his turn assist her with his powerful hand, lead her into his own world, his own life, his way of progress and new ideas—the way of the future !\*

Unfortunately this is not the way of the world. I have sought every where, but in vain, for this fine exchange of thought, which alone realises marriage. They certainly try for a moment, in the beginning, to communicate together, but they are soon discouraged : the husband grows dumb, his heart, dried up with the arid influence of interest and business, can

\* It is impossible to remain ever fixed to the same spot. We either rise higher, or sink lower.\* If our whole life must be a continual progress, this may be obtained much better in the natural family than in the artificial one of convents, &c. Does a woman end like a woman, when she begins life like a mother, or grandmother? She has ever new motives to recommence her own moral education, and to carry it still farther. Woman would always rise higher (and this is the reason why she attaches herself to man). Well, then! nature gives her for a ladder, not the direction of a single man, but a successive association with better generations, each of which reproduces the mother, renewed and improved.

no longer find words. At first she is astonished and uneasy : she questions him. But questions annoy him ; and she no longer dares to speak to him. Let him be easy ; the time is coming when his wife, sitting thoughtful by the fire-side, absent in her turn, and framing her imaginary plans, will leave him in quiet possession of his taciturnity.

First of all, she has a son. It is to him, if he be left to her, that she will devote herself entirely. Should she go out, she gives him her hand, and soon her arm ; he is now like a young brother, “ a little husband.” How tall he has grown already ! how quickly time passes ; and it is a pity he grows so ; for now comes the separation, his Latin and his tears. Must he not become a learned man ? must he not enter, as soon as possible, into the world of violence and opposition, where he will acquire the bad passions which are cultivated so carefully in us, pride, ambition, hatred, and envy ? The mother would like to wait longer : “ What is the hurry ? he is so young, and those schools are so strict ! He will learn much better at home, if they will let him remain with her ; she will engage masters and superintend his studies herself ; she will discontinue going to balls.” — “ Impossible, madam, impossible ! you would make a milksop of him.” The fact is, the father, though he likes his son very much, finds, that in a well-regulated house this movement and constant noise and bustle are intolerable. He is unable to support any thing of the sort : fatigued, disgusted, and ill-humoured, he wants silence and repose.

Wise husbands, who make so little of the resistance of a mother, do you not perceive that it is also by an instinct of virtue that this woman wishes to keep her son the pure and irreproachable witness, before whom she would always have remained holy ? If you knew how useful the presence of the child is to the house, you yourself would desire to keep him. As long as that child remained there, the house was blessed. In his presence how difficult it is to loosen the family tie ! What completes marriage and the family ? the child, the object of their hopes. Who maintains the family ? the child they possess. He is the aim and the end, the mediator — I had almost said the whole.

We cannot repeat it too often, for nothing is more true — woman is alone. She is alone, if she has a husband, she is also alone, even with a son. Once at school, she sees him only by favour, and often at long intervals. When he leaves school, other prisons await the youth, and other exiles.

A brilliant evening party is given : — enter those well-lighted rooms, you see the women sitting in long rows, well dressed, and entirely alone. Go, about four o'clock, to the Champs-Élysées, and there you will see again the same women, sad and spiritless, on their way to the Bois de Boulogne, each in her own carriage, and alone. These are in a calash, those at the far end of a shop ; but all are equally alone.

There is nothing in the life of women, who have the misfortune to have nothing to do, that may not be explained by one single word — loneliness, *ennui*. *Ennui*, which is supposed to be a languishing and negative disposition of the mind, is, for a nervous woman, a positive evil impossible to support. It grasps its prey, and gnaws it to the core\* : whoever suspends the torment for a moment is considered a saviour.

*Ennui* makes them receive female friends, whom they know to be inquisitive, envious, slandering enemies. *Ennui* makes them endure novels in newspapers, which are suddenly cut short, at the moment of the greatest interest.† *Ennui* carries them to concerts, where they find a mixture of every kind of music, and where the diversity of styles is a fatigue for the ear. *Ennui* drags them to a sermon, which thousands listen to, but which not one of them could bear to read. Nay, even the sickening half-worldly and half-devout productions, with which the neo-catholics inundate the Faubourg Saint Germain, will find readers among these poor women, the martyrs of *ennui*.

\* Love itself remedies it much less than is supposed. Our fine novels of the day have had a totally contrary effect to what was supposed. The passions are lessened. Real passion often loses much, in spite of what is said to the contrary, in presence of these powerful pictures ; it suffers by the comparison. Woman very soon finds her own personal romance weak and insipid, in presence of Indiana and Valentine. Love soon grows pale, and loses its charm, in the eyes of a woman of sense, whose experience is enlightened by this pitiless light.

† This is said only against the form ; and by no means against the admirable talent that some writers have shown in them.

Such delicate and sickly forms can support a nauseous dose of musk and incense, which would turn the stomach of any one in health.

One of these young authors explains, in a novel, all the advantage there is in beginning gallantry by gallant devotion. The proceeding is not new. All I wish is, that those who borrowed it from *Tartuffe* would not give it to us, without its fair portion of wit and humour.

But they have no great need of it. Women listen to their disguised declarations and ambiguous endearments, as a matter of conscience to earn their salvation. The woman, who, with the most sober friend, would be offended at the very first word of friendship, suffers patiently this double-meaning language of the young Levite. The intelligent woman of experience and the world, who has read and seen much, shuts her eyes to the mischief. If he has but little talent, if he is heavy and uninteresting, yet his intentions are so good! Father such a one answers for him; he is an excellent young man.

The fact is, that whilst he pretends devotion, he speaks of love; this is his merit. Even though it be spoken of in a weak and insipid manner, it is still a merit with her who is no longer young. The husband, however distinguished he may be, has the fault of being a *positive* man, entirely taken up, as they say, with worldly interests. It is very true, he is working for the interest of his family; he provides for the future welfare of his children; he consumes his life to support the luxury in which his wife lives, and beyond his fortune.

Perhaps this husband would be justified in saying that all this, however material may be the result, is also for him a moral interest, *an interest of the heart*. Perhaps he might add, that in being engaged with worldly interests in our assemblies and tribunals, besides a thousand other different positions for the profit of others, we may show ourselves to be more *disinterested*, and consequently more spiritualised, than all those brokers of spirituality who turn the Church into an exchange.

Let us here point out a contrast which is not sufficiently noticed.

In the middle ages the *priest* was the spiritual and *mortified*

*man.* By the studies to which he alone devoted himself, by nocturnal prayers and vigils, by the excess of fasting, and by monastic flagellations, he mortified his body. But in these days very little remains of all that ; the Church has softened down every thing. The priests live as others do : if many pass a mean and pitiful life, it is, at least, generally unattended with risk. We see it, moreover, in the freedom of mind with which they engage the leisure of women with interminable conversations.

Who is the mortified man in the present day, in this time of hard work, eager efforts, and fiery opposition ? It is the layman, the worldly man. This man of the world, full of cares, works all day and all night, either for his family, or for the state. Being often engaged in details of business or studies, too thorny to interest his wife and children, he cannot communicate to them what fills his own mind. Even at the hour of rest he speaks little, being always pursuing his idea. Success in business and invention in science, are only obtained at a high price — the price that Newton mentions, *by ever thinking of it*. Solitary among his fellows, he runs the risk, in making their glory, or their fortune, to become a stranger to them.

The Churchman, on the contrary, who, in these days, to judge of him by what he publishes, studies little, and invents nothing, and who no longer wages against himself that war of mortifications imposed by the middle ages, can, coolly and quietly, pursue two very different occupations at the same time. By his assiduity and fawning words, he gains over the family of the man of business, at the very moment that he hurls down upon *him* from the pulpit the thunders of his eloquence.

## CHAPTER III.

THE MOTHER. — ALONE, FOR A LONG TIME, SHE CAN BRING UP HER CHILD. — INTELLECTUAL NOURISHMENT. — GESTATION, INCUBATION, AND EDUCATION. — THE CHILD GUARANTEES THE MOTHER. — THE MOTHER GUARANTEES THE CHILD. — SHE PROTECTS ITS NATURAL ORIGINALITY. — PUBLIC EDUCATION MUST LIMIT THIS ORIGINALITY. — EVEN THE FATHER LIMITS IT. — THE MOTHER DEFENDS IT. — MATERNAL WEAKNESS. — THE MOTHER WOULD MAKE HER SON A HERO. — THE HEROIC DISINTERESTEDNESS OF MATERNAL LOVE.

WE have already said, If you wish your family to resist the foreign influence which dissolves it, *keep the child at home* as much as possible. Let the *mother* bring it up under the father's direction, till the moment when it is claimed for public instruction by its great mother, its native land.\* If the mother bring up the child, the consequence will be, that she will always remain by her husband's side, needing his advice, and anxious to receive from him fresh supplies of knowledge. The real idea of a family will here be realised, which is for the child to be initiated by the mother, and the wife by the husband.

The mother's instinct is just and true; it deserves to be respected. She wishes to keep her child: forcibly separated from him at the moment of birth, she is ever seeking to rejoin that part of herself which a cruel violence snatched from her, but which has its root in her heart. When they take it from her to bring it up at a distance, it is a second separation. The mother and the child weep in common, but their tears are disregarded. This is not right. These tears, in which we think we see only weakness, ought not to be disregarded. They show that the child needs her still. Nursing is not yet finished. Intellectual nourishment, like physical food, ought in the begin-

\* And even then it is a great advantage for the mother to see him again every evening. She will see at the first glance every useful or injurious change, many things which the master, or even the father, would not have remarked till much later.

ning to be administered to the child under the form, as it were, of milk, fluid, tepid, mild, and full of life.\* Woman alone can so give it. Men expect too much at once of this new-born babe, whose teeth, scarcely formed, are painful. They want to give it bread, and they beat it if it does not bite. In God's name give him more milk, it will drink willingly.†

Who will believe some future day, that men have thus undertaken to nurse and feed these sucklings? Ah! leave them alone to women!‡ A lovely sight to see a child rocked in the arms of a man! Take care, awkward idiot! It is fragile; handling it in your clownish hand, you may break it.

This is the dispute between the master and child: man imparts science by methods proper to man, and his state of fixed rules by very precise classifications, with angular, and, as it were, crystallised forms. Well! these crystal prisms, as luminous as they may be, wound by their angles and sharp points. The child, in a soft and tender state, cannot, for a long time, receive any thing which has not the fluidity of life. The master grows angry and impatient at the slowness of the pupil and knows not how to succeed with him. There is but one person in the world who has the delicate perception of the careful management which the child requires, and this one person is she who has borne it, and who forms for ever with it an identical whole. Gestation, incubation, and education, are three words which have long been synonymous.

Much longer than people would believe. The influence of the mother over the child, whose faculties are developing, is greater and more decisive than that which she exercised over the suckling infant. I do not know whether it be indispensable

\* Which excludes whatever makes a plaything of science, such as the mnemotechnics, &c., &c.

† Michael Angelo, the painter of sybils and prophets, and himself a prophet, has taught us, in his own manner, how initiation belongs especially to woman. Under the feet of the terrible virgins in whose mouth thunders the word of God, he has introduced the initiation of children and mothers in the most ingenious manner.

‡ A writer, of enlarged ideas, has said, that schools for girls should be founded before those of boys, and that every girl, who will be a wife and mother, will become a school herself. •

for the mother to feed it from her breast; but I am very sure it is necessary that she should nourish it from her heart. Chivalry was perfectly aware that love was the most powerful motive for education. That alone did more in the middle ages to advance humanity than all the disputes of school-divinity have been able to do to retard it.

We also have our school-divinity, the spirit of empty abstractions and verbal disputes: we shall be able to combat its influence only by prolonging that of the mother, associating her with education, and by giving the child a well-beloved teacher. Love, they say, is a great master. This is especially true of the greatest, the deepest, and the purest of all affections.

How blind and imprudent we are! We take the child from its mother, at a time when it was most necessary to her. We deprive her of the dear occupation for which God had formed her; and we are afterwards surprised if this woman, cruelly separated, now languishing and idle, give herself up to vain musings; suffer anew the yoke she formerly bore; and, if, as is often the case, fancying herself to remain faithful, she listen to the tempter, who speaks to her in the name of God.

Be prudent, be wise; leave her her son. Woman must ever be loving. Leave her rather the lover whom nature gives her; him whom she would have preferred to all others, whilst you are occupied with your business (with your passions perhaps). Leave on her arm the tall and slender youth, and she will be proud and happy. You fear, lest, having been kept too long by his mother, he may become effeminate. But, on the contrary, if you left her her son, *she* would become masculine. Try her, she will change, and you will be astonished yourself. Little excursions on foot, and long ones on horseback — no trouble will be too much for her. She begins bravely and heartily the exercises of the young man; she makes herself of his own age, and is born again in this *vita nuova*; even you on your return will think, when you see your Rosalind\*, that you have two sons.

It is a general rule to which, at least, I have hardly ever seen

\* Shakspeare's "As you Like it."



any exception, that superior men are all the *sons of their mother*. She has stamped upon them, and they reproduce, her moral as well as her physical features.

I am about to surprise you. I will tell you that without her you will never be a man. The mother alone is patient enough to develop the young creature, by taking proper care of his liberty. We must be on our guard, and take especial care not to place the child, still too weak and pliable, in the hands of strangers. People of the best intentions, by pressing too much upon him, run the risk of so crushing his faculties, that he will never be able to enjoy the free use of them again. The world is full of men, who remain bondsmen all their lives, from having borne a heavy load too soon. A too solid and too precocious education has injured something within them ; their originality, the *genius*, the *ingegno*, which is the prime part of man.

Who respects in these days the original and free ingenuity of character, that sacred genius which we receive at our birth ? This is almost always the part which offends and gets blamed ; it is the reason why "*this boy is not like every body else.*" Hardly does his young nature awake, and flourish in its liberty, than they are all astonished, and all shake their heads : "What is this ? we never saw the like."—Shut him up quickly—stifle this living flower. Here are the iron cages.—Ah ! you were blooming, and displaying your luxuriant foliage in the sun. Be wise and prudent, O flower ! become dry, and shut up your leaves.

But this poor little flower, against which they are all leagued — what is it, I pray you, but the individual, special, and original element by which this being would have distinguished itself from others, and added a new feature to the great variety of human characters—a genius, perhaps, to the series of great minds. The sterile spirit is almost always that plant which, having been tied too fast to the dead wood which serves to support it, has dried upon it, and gradually become like it ; there it is, very regular, and well fastened up, you may fear nothing eccentric from it ; the tree is, however, *dead*, and will never bear leaf more.

What do I mean ? that the support is useless, and that we

must leave the plant to itself? Nothing is further from my thoughts. I believe in the necessity of both educations, that of the family and that of the country. Let us distinguish their influence.

The latter, our public education, which is certainly better in our days than it ever was — what does it require? What is its end and aim? It wishes to harmonise the child with his native land, and with that great country the world. This is what constitutes its legitimacy and necessity. It purposes especially to give him a fund of ideas common to all, to make him a reasonable being, and prevent him from being out of tune with what surrounds him; it hinders him from jarring in the great concert where he is going to take his part, and it checks what may be too irregular in his lively sallies.

So far for public education. Family life is liberty. Yet even here there are obstacles and shackles to his original moral activity. The father regulates this activity: his uneasy foresight imposes on him the duty to bring early this wild young colt to the furrow, where he must soon toil. It too often happens that the father makes a mistake, consults, first of all, his own conveniences, and seeks the profitable and ready traced career, rather than that to which his young and powerful colt was called by nature.

The triumphs of the courser have frequently been lost in the trammels of the riding school.

Poor liberty! Who then will have eyes to see thee, or a heart to cherish thee? Who will have the patience, the infinite indulgence required to support thy first wanderings, and encourage occasionally what fatigues the stranger, the indifferent person, nay, the father himself? God alone, who has made this creature, and who, having made him, knows him well enough to see and love what is good in him, even in what is bad, God, I say, and with God the mother: for here it is one and the same thing.

When we reflect that ordinary life is so short, and that so many die very young, we hesitate to abridge this first, this best period of life, when the child, free under its mother's protection, lives in Grace, and not in the Law. But if it be true, as I

think, that this time, which people believe lost, is precisely the only precious and irreparable period, in which among childish games sacred *genius* tries its first flight, the season when, becoming fledged, the young eagle tries to fly — ah ! pray do not shorten it. Do not banish the youth from the maternal paradise before his time ; give him one day more ; to-morrow, all well and good ; God knows it will be soon enough ! To-morrow, he will bend to his work and crawl along the furrow. But to-day, leave him there, let him gain full strength and life, and breathe with an open heart the vital air of liberty. An education which is too zealous and restless, and which exacts too much, is dangerous for children. We are ever increasing the mass of study and science, and such exterior acquisitions ; but the interior suffers for it. This one is nothing but Latin, the next shines in Mathematics ; but where is the *man*, I pray you ? \* And yet it was the *man*, precisely, that was loved and taken care of by the mother. It was man she respected in the wanderings of the Child. She seemed to depress her own influence, and even her superintendence, in order that he might act and be both free and strong ; but, at the same time, she ever surrounded him as if with an invisible embrace.

There is a peril, I am well aware of it, in this education of love. What love wishes and desires more than all, is to sacrifice itself, and every thing else — interests, conveniences, habits, and even life, if necessary. The object of this self-sacrifice may, in his own childish egotism, receive all the sacrifices as a thing due, allow himself to be treated as an inert, motionless idol, and become the more incapable of action, the more they do for him.

This danger is real, but it is counterbalanced by the ardent ambition of the maternal heart, which places, almost always, her best hopes upon her child, and burns to realise them. Every mother of any value has one firm belief, which is, that her son

\* If we fear lest the inward moral man may perish in schools of too strict and too learned a character, what must we say of those, in which masters make a direct attack upon morality, by giving the child habits of disloyalty and denunciation, which they practise among themselves ? See farther, one of the last notes.

is destined to be a hero, in action or in science, no matter which. All that has disappointed her expectations in her sad experience of this world will now be realised by this infant. The miseries of the present are already redeemed by the prospect of this splendid future: every thing is miserable now; but only let *him* grow, and every thing will be prosperous! O poetry! O hope! where are the limits of maternal thought? "I am only a woman, but here is a man: I have given a man to the world." Only one thing perplexes her: will her child be a Bonaparte, a Voltaire, or a Newton?

If, in order to be so, he absolutely must leave her—well! let him go, let him depart from her; she consents to it: if she must tear her own heart-strings, she will. Love is capable of doing every thing, even of sacrificing love itself. Yes, let him depart, follow his high destiny, and accomplish the grand dream she had when she bore him in her bosom, or upon her knees. And then, a miracle: this fearful woman, who just before durst not see him walk alone, without fearing he might fall, is become so brave, that she launches him forth in the most dangerous career, on the ocean, or else to that bloody war in Africa. She trembles, she is dying of uneasiness, and yet she persists. What can support her? Her belief that her child cannot perish, since he is destined to be a hero.

He returns. How much he is changed! What! is this fierce soldier my son? He departed a child, and he comes back a man: he seeks to be married. This is another sacrifice, which is not less serious. He loves another! And his mother, in whose heart he is, and ever will be the first, will possess the second place in his affections—alas! a very small place in the moments of his passion. She seeks for, and chooses her own rival: she loves her on his account; she adorns her; she becomes her attendant, and leads her to the altar; and all she asks for *there is*, that the mother may not be forgotten in the wife!

## CHAPTER IV.

**LOVE. — LOVE WISHES TO RAISE, NOT TO ABSORB. — THE FALSE THEORY OF OUR ADVERSARIES, AND THEIR DANGEROUS PRACTICE. — LOVE WISHES TO FORM FOR ITSELF AN EQUAL WHO MAY LOVE FREELY. — LOVE IN THE WORLD, AND IN THE CIVIL WORLD. — LOVE IN FAMILIES. — LITTLE UNDERSTOOD BY THE MIDDLE AGES. — FAMILY RELIGION.**

WILL it be said that, in the preceding chapter, being seduced by a sweeter subject, I have lost sight of the whole subject in dispute hitherto pursued in my book?

I think I have, on the contrary, thrown much light upon the question. Maternal love (that miracle of God) and maternal education enable us to understand what every education, direction, or initiation ought to be.

The singular advantage which the mother has in education is, that, being more than all others devoted and disinterested, she respects infantine personality in the fragile little thing which is becoming a person. She is, for the child, the defender of his original individuality. She wishes, even at the expense of her own feelings, that he should act according to his genius, and that he may grow up and *rise*. What can education and true direction require? What love desires in its highest and most disinterested idea — that the young creature may *rise*. Take this word in both its acceptations. She wishes the child may rise above herself, up to the level of him who helps her, and even above him, if he can. The stronger party, far from absorbing the weaker, wishes to make him strong, and put him on an equal footing. She endeavours to effect this by developing in him not only whatever is similar in their natures, but even whatever is characteristically distinctive between them, by exciting his free originality, provoking activity in this being born for action, and by appealing to the person, and what is most personal in the person, his will. The dearest wish of love is to

excite the will, and the moral force of the person loved, to its highest degree to heroism !

The ideal of every mother, and it is the true one in education, is to make a hero, a man powerful in actions and fruitful in works, who may be endowed with will, power, and a creative genius. Let us compare with this ideal that of ecclesiastical education and direction.

The latter wishes to make a saint, and *not* a hero : it believes these two words to be diametrically opposite. It is mistaken also in its idea of sanctity, in making it consist not in being in harmony with God, but in absorption in God.

All this priestly theology, as soon as we provoke it a little, and do not allow it to remain in inconsistency, falls headlong down the irresistible declivity, right into this abyss. There it ended, as it was obliged to end, in the seventeenth century. The great directors of that time, who, by being the last, had the advantage of analysing the thing, show us perfectly well the bottom of it, which is annihilation, the art of annihilating activity, the will, and personality. "Annihilate? — Yes, but in God." — But does God wish it? — His active and creating spirit must wish us to resemble him, to act, and to create. You have a wrong idea of God the Father.

This false theory is convicted in practice. By following it closely we have seen that it arrives at quite an opposite goal. It promises to absorb man in God ; and it consoles him for this absorption, by promising him that he shall participate in the infinite existence which he is entering. But, in reality, it does nothing more than absorb man in man, in infinite littleness. The person directed being annihilated in the director, of two persons there remains but one ; the other, as a person, has perished, and become a thing.

Devout direction, noticed in our first part among the most loyal directors, and among very pious women, gives me two results, which I state thus :—

1st, A saint who discourses for a long time with a female saint on the love of God, infallibly converts her to love.

2dly, If this love remain pure, it is a chance ; it is because the man is a saint ; for the person directed, losing gradually all

her own will, must, in course of time, be at his mercy. We must suppose, also, that he who may do every thing will take no advantage of it, and that this miracle of abstinence will be renewed every day. The priest has always thought himself, in his interior strength, to be a great master in matters of love. Accustomed to control his own passions, to be deceitful, and to beat about the bush, he believes he is the exclusive possessor of the real secret how passions are to be managed. He advances under cover of ambiguous expressions, and he advances in safety ; for he is patient, and waits till he has gained a footing in habits and in customs. He laughs in his sleeve at our impassioned vivacity, imprudent frankness, and ungoverned impetuosity, which cause us to pass wide of the mark.

If love was the art of surprising the soul, of subjugating it by authority and insinuation, and of conquering it by fear, in order to gain it by indulgence, so that, when wearied and drowsy with exertion, it may allow itself to be enveloped and caught in an invisible net ; if this were love, then certainly the priest would be its great teacher.

Clever masters ! learn from ignorant and unskilful men, that, with all your little arts, you have never known what is this sacred thing. It requires a sincere heart, and loyalty in the means, as its first condition ; the second is, that generosity which does not wish to enslave, but rather to set at liberty and fortify what it loves ; to love it in liberty, leaving it free to love or not to love.

Come, my saints ! and listen to worldly men on this subject : to dramatists, to Molière, and to Shakspeare. These have known more about it than you. The lover is asked who is the loved object ? of what name ? of what figure ? and of what shape ? "*Just as high as my heart.*"\*

A noble standard, which is that of love, as well as that of education, and of every kind of initiation : a sincerely wished for equality, the desire of raising the other person to one's own height, and of making her one's equal, "just as high as one's heart." Shakspeare has said so ; Molière has done so. The

\* Shakspeare's "As you Like it."

latter was, in the highest degree, "the educating genius\*;" one who wishes to raise and set free, and who loves in equality, liberty, and intelligence. He has denounced, as a crime †, that unworthy love which surprises the soul by keeping it apart in ignorance, and holding it as a slave and captive.

In his life, conformable to his works, he gave the noble example of that generous love, which wishes that the person loved should be *his equal, and as much as himself*, which strengthens her, and gives her arms even against himself. This is love, and this is faith. It is the belief that sooner or later the emancipated being must return to the most worthy. And who is the most worthy? Is it not he who wished to be loved with liberty?

Nevertheless, let us well weigh the meaning of this important word *his equal*, and all the dangers it may contain. It is as if this creator said to the creature, whom he has made and is now emancipating, "Thou art free; the power under which thou hast grown up holds thee no more: being away from me, and attached to me now only by the heart and memory, thou mayest act and think elsewhere, nay, against me if thou wilt!"

This is what is so sublime in love; and the reason why God pardons it so many weaknesses! It is because in this unlimited disinterestedness, wishing to make a free being and to be loved freely by it, it creates its own peril. The saying, "You may act elsewhere," contains also "to love elsewhere," and the chance of losing the object. That hand, so weak before, but now strengthened and made bold by all the cares of affection, receives the sword from love: *even* would she turn it against him, she can; there is nothing to hinder her, for he has reserved nothing for himself.

Pray let us exalt this idea, and extend it from the love of woman to universal love, to that which makes the life both of the world and of civil society.

In the world, it calls incessantly from kingdom to kingdom the ever-quickenings life, which receives the flame, and goes on rising. It raises from unknown depths beings which it emancipates, and arms with liberty, with the power of acting well or

\* The ingenious and very just remark of E. Noël.

† In his *Ecole des Femmes*, and elsewhere.



ill, and even of acting against him, who creates them, and makes them free.

In the civil world, does love (charity, patriotism, or whatever they call it,) do any thing but this? Its work is to call to social life and political power whatever is yet without life in the city. It raises up the weak and poor in their rough path, where they crawl on their hands and feet against destiny, and bestows upon them equality and liberty.

The inferior degree of love is a desire to absorb life. Its superior degree is to wish to exalt life in energy and fruitfulness. It rejoices in raising, augmenting, and creating what it loves. Its happiness is to see a new creature of God rise under its influence, and to contribute its aid to the creation, whether it be for good or for ill.

"But is not love, with this disinterestedness, an uncommon miracle? One of those very short instances when the night of our egotism is illumined by a ray from God?"

No, the miracle is permanent. You see it, you have it before your eyes, but you turn away your head. Uncommon, perhaps, in the lover, it is every where visible in the mother. Mortal, you seek God in heaven and under the earth, but he is in your own domestic circle.

Man, woman, and child, the unity of the three persons, and their mutual mediation — this is the mystery of mysteries. The divine idea of Christianity is to have thus put the family upon the altar. It placed it there, and there it has left it, for fifteen hundred years: my poor monk, in the middle ages, contemplated it there in vain. He could never understand the mother as initiation.\* He exhausted his energies by taking the sterile side; he pursued the Virgin †, and left us Our Lady.

\* The middle ages go either too high or too low: they knew no middle course. The triumph of woman is quite ideal in Beatrice, and the passion of woman falls too low in Griselda, who is resigned even as a mother. There is nothing practical. This ignorance of a middle course is shocking, and assuredly still more so in the sermons of the present day. Nothing but heaven or hell; nothing between. Woman, in their estimation, is either a saint or a harlot. But they say not a word for the prudent spouse, or the respectable mother. This spirit of exaggeration makes their language singularly sterile.

† The mystery of monks and unmarried men is every where perceptible.

Man of modern times! thou shalt do what he could not. This shall be thy work. Mayest thou only, in the height of thy abstract genius, not disdain women and children, who will teach thee life! Instruct them in science and the world, and they will speak to thee of God.

Let the family-hearth become firm and strong, then the tottering edifice of religion, political religion, will quietly settle down. Let it never be forgotten, that humble stone, in which we see only our good old domestic Lares, is the corner-stone of the Temple, and the foundation-stone of the City.

## ONE WORD TO THE PRIESTS.

I have finished, yet my heart has not. Therefore, one word more.

One word to the priests. I had handled them gently, yet they have attacked me. Well! even now, it is not them that I attack. This book is not against them.

It attacks their own slavish state, the unnatural position in which they are kept, and the strange conditions which make them at once unhappy and dangerous: if it has any effect, it will prepare for them the period of deliverance, personal and mental freedom.

Let them say and do what they please, they will not prevent me from being interested in their fate. I impute nothing to them. They are not free to be just, or to love or to hate: they receive the words they are to say, their sentiments and thoughts, from higher powers. They who set them on against me are the same men who are, at this moment, preparing against them

They make the Virgin younger and younger, ever more childish, and less motherly. They preserve a thousand silly and indecent legends, and they throw aside the essential legend, that would have fertilised the middle ages—"The education of Jesus by the Virgin." They must have perceived, however, that he too had a *maternal* heart. He weeps for Lazarus. — "Let the little children come unto me," &c.

the most cruel inquisition.\* The more insulated and miserable they are made, the greater will be the advantage derived from their restless activity; let them have neither home, family, country, nor heart, if it be possible: to serve a dead system, none but dead men are wanted—wandering and troubled spirits, without a sepulchre and without repose.

By means of the words *unity* and *universal church*, they have made them quit the ways of the Church of France. They now enjoy the fruits of this change! They well know what Rome is, and what a jesuitical bishop is. If the universality of mind (which is the only true one) was ever possessed by Rome, she lost it a long time ago; it is to be met with again, in modern times, and it is in France. For two centuries past, we may say, morally speaking, that France is the pope. The authority is here, under one form or another; it is here by Louis XIV., by Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau, by the *Constituante*, the Code and Napoleon. Europe has always its centre, every other nation is on the outside.

The world goes on, and flies away, far, very far from the middle ages. Most people think of them no more; but I shall not forget them. The shameful parade made of them by any one before my eyes, will not induce me to turn my heart from those dark and mournful ages, with which I have been so long acquainted, suffering when they have suffered.† The sympathy

\* The result of the details given by a newspaper about the last ecclesiastical *retreats*, is, that the majority of the bishops impose upon their priests the jesuitical rule called *manifestation of conscience*, which obliges them to confess to the confessor delegated by the bishop, and to denounce one another. The obligation extends to the women whom the faults of the priests have compromised. See the *Bien Social, Journal du Clergé secondaire* (Nov. 1844): this catholic paper, after one year's circulation, is already subscribed to by 3000 priests. See also an excellent article in the *Réveil de l'Ain* (Nov. 17, 1844), and the courageous letters of M. l'Abbé Thionis, in the *Bien Public* of Maçon. To be able to speak out, when they have such a mountain upon their breasts, shows a heroic heart.—Let us name with respect the two Saints Alignols. But, alas! what do they expect to do in their journey to Rome? what do they expect to find in that empty sepulchre?

† Even in 1833 I formed a wish, and expressed a hope, that the principle of the middle ages would be transformed: "It will be transformed, to live again." History of France, last page of vol. ii. See also my introduction to Universal History, 1831.

I retain for that by-gone age, whose ashes I have warmed again, prevents me from being indifferent to its most faithless representatives. I do not hate, but I make comparisons, and am sad. I cannot pass the front of the church-porch without saying to Notre Dame, in the words of the ancient, "O miseram domum, quàm dispari dominaris domino!" Alas! poor house, thou hast made a sad change of masters!

I have never been insensible either to the humiliation of the church, or to the sufferings of the priest. I have them all present, both before my imagination and in my heart. I have followed this unfortunate man in the career of privations, and in the miserable life into which he is dragged by the hand of a hypocritical authority. And in his loneliness, on his cold and melancholy hearth, where he sometimes weeps at night, let him remember that a man has often wept with him, and that I am that man.

Who would not pity this victim of social contradictions? The laws tell him things diametrically opposite to one another, as if to sport with him. They will and they will not have him obey nature. The canon law says No, and the civil law says Yes. If he take the latter to be serious, the man of the civil law, the judge, whose protection he expects, acts like a priest, seizes him by the robe, and hands him over degraded to the yoke of the canon law. Agree together, then, O laws! and let us be able to find authority somewhere. If this be law, and the other one directly contrary be also law, what will he do, who believes them both to be sacred? \*

Oh how my heart swells for all these unfortunate men!

\* The clergy (good Catholics) of several parts of the south of Germany have formally expressed a wish that this disagreement should cease, and that the church should join the progress of the age, which makes marriage the true modern state, as celibacy was (at least ideally) that of the middle ages. The situation of the priest *alone*, yet not alone, free and not free, in the midst of a world in discord with him, reminds us of that of a man condemned to the cellular treatment, who should carry his cell about with him. Nothing would be more likely to make him mad. (See the fine articles of Léon Faucher.) Every one has read the late history of that Benedictine abbé (I think, in the Tyrol), who, not wishing to violate his vows, and not being able to be released from them, stabbed himself to the heart.

How many prayers have I made that they may be permitted to abandon a condition, which gives so rude a contradiction to nature and to the progress of the world ! Oh ! that I might with my hands build up and cheer the domestic hearth of the poor priest, give him the first rights of man, re-establish him in truth and life, and say to him, "Come and sit with us, leave that deadly shadow, and take thy place, O brother, in the sunshine of God !"

Two men have always deeply touched my heart, two solitary beings, two monks — the soldier and the priest. I have seen, often in my thoughts, and always with sadness, these two great sterile armies, to whom intellectual food is refused, or measured out with so niggardly a hand. They whose hearts have been weaned would require to be nourished with the vivifying food of the mind.

What will be the ameliorations and the remedies for these serious evils ? We shall not attempt to tell them now. Either means and contrivances are found out by time, or it manages to do without them.

What we may safely say is, that one day or other, these terms *priest* and *soldier* will indicate two ages, rather than two conditions. The word *priest*, in its origin, meant *old man* ; a young priest is a nonsensical contradiction.

The soldier is the youth who, after the school of childhood, and that of work, comes to be proved in the great national school of the army, and to gain strength, before he settles down to the quiet state of matrimony and the family table. Military life, when the state has made it what it ought to be, will be the last education, varied with studies, voyages, and perils, the experience of which will be of advantage to the new family which the man will form on his return.

The priest, on the contrary, in the highest acceptation of the term, ought to be an old man, as he was at first, or at least a man of a mature age, who, having passed through the cares of this world, and being well acquainted with family life, has been taught by his experience to understand the sense of the Great Family of the Universe. Seated among the old men, like the elders of Israel, he would communicate to the young the

treasures of his experience; he would be the man for all parties; the man who belongs to the poor, the conciliating umpire to prevent lawsuits, and the physician of health to prevent diseases. To be all that, something more is required than an excitable, hot-headed young man. It ought to be a man who has seen, learned, and suffered much, and who has at last found in his own heart the kind words, which may comfort us on our way to the world to come.

THE END.

LONDON:  
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New-Street-Square.

# THE PEOPLE.

BY

J. MICHELET.

TRANSLATED, WITH THE AUTHOR'S ESPECIAL APPROBATION,

BY C. COCKS, B.L.

TRANSLATOR OF

"PRIESTS, WOMEN, AND FAMILIES," "ANTONIO PEREZ AND PHILIP II.,"  
ETC. ETC.

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Printed by A. SPOTTISWOODE,  
New-Street-Square.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER

ADDRESSED BY

M. MICHELET TO THE TRANSLATOR.

---

MONSIEUR,

Mon nouvel ouvrage “ Le Peuple,” est peu avancé encore. Je vous en enverrai le premier exemplaire en feuilles (en Janvier ? ou Février?).

. . . . .  
. . . . .

Croyez, Monsieur, à ma reconnaissance pour tout le temps que vous consacrez à mes ouvrages, et recevez mes cordiales salutations.

J. MICHELET.

Paris, Oct. 6th, 1845.



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TO

## M. EDGAR QUINET.

THIS book is more than a book ; — it is myself. That is the reason it belongs to you.

Yes, it is myself ; and, I may venture to affirm, it is you also. As you have justly remarked, our thoughts, whether communicated or not, are ever in unison. We live with the same heart. A delightful harmony ! It may surprise, but is it not natural ? All our various works have sprung from the same living root : — “ The sentiment of France, and the idea of our country.”

Accept, then, this book of “ THE PEOPLE,” because it is you, because it is myself ! We represent, as much as any, perhaps — you by your military, I by my industrial, origin — the two modern conditions of the *Peuple*, and their new advent.

I have made this book of *myself*, of my life, and of my heart. It is the fruit of my experience, rather than of my research. I have derived it from my observation, and my intercourse with friends and neighbours ; I have gleaned it from the highway : fortune loves to favour him who ever follows the self-same thought. Lastly, I have found it, above all, in the reminiscences of my youth. To know the life of the people, their toils and sufferings, I had but to interrogate my memory.

For I, too, my friend, have worked with my hands. The true name of modern man, that of *workman*, I am entitled to, in more than one sense. Before I made books, I *composed* them literally ; I arranged letters before I grouped ideas ; and I am not ignorant of the sadness of the workshop, and the wearisomeness of long hours.

Sad times ! It was the latter years of the Empire ; all seemed to be lost at once to me — my family, my fortune, and my country. It is to those trials, doubtless, that I owe the best part of my nature ; to them must be ascribed the little value I possess as a man and an

historian. From these I have especially retained a profound sentiment of the people, the perfect knowledge of the treasure that is in them, *the virtue of sacrifice*, the tender remembrance of precious souls that I have known in the most humble conditions.

Nobody must be surprised, if, knowing as well as anybody the past condition of that people, and having shared their life myself, I feel a burning desire for truth when I am spoken to about them. When the progress of my history led me to study the questions of the day, and I cast my eyes upon the books in which they are discussed, I confess I was surprised to find them almost all in contradiction to my memory. I then shut the books, and placed myself among the people to the best of my power; the lonely writer plunged again into the crowd, listened to their noise, noted their words. They were perfectly the same people, changed only in outward appearance; my memory did not deceive me. I went about, therefore, consulting men, listening to their account of their own condition, and gathering from their lips, what is not always to be found in the most brilliant writers, the words of common sense.

This inquiry, begun at Lyons about ten years ago, I have prosecuted in other towns, studying, at the same time, with practical men of the most positive minds, the true situation of the rural districts so much neglected by our economists. The mass of new information I have thus acquired, and which is not in any book, would scarcely be credited. Next to the conversation of men of genius and profound erudition, that of the people is certainly the most instructive. If one be not able to converse with Beranger, Lamennais, or Lamartine, we must go into the fields and chat with a peasant. What is to be learned from the middle class? As to the *salons*, I never left them without finding my heart shrunk and chilled.

My varied studies of history had revealed to me facts of the greatest interest, unnoticed by historians: — the phases, for instance, and the vicissitudes of small properties before the Revolution.

My inquiry among *living* documents taught me likewise many things that are not in our statistics. I will mention one, which some will, perhaps, find trivial, but which I consider important and worthy of all attention. It is the immense increase of linen articles acquired by poor families about 1842, though wages have lowered, or, at least diminished in value, by the natural diminution in the value of money. This fact, important in itself as an advance in cleanliness, which is connected with so many other virtues, is still more so, inasmuch as it proves an increasing stability in households and families, — above all, the influence of woman, who, gaining little by her own means, can only make this outlay by appropriating part of the wages of the husband. Woman, in these households, is economy, order, and

providence. Every influence she gains, is an advancement in morality.\*

This instance was not altogether useless, to show the insufficiency of the documents gathered from statistics and other works of political economy, to make us comprehend the people; they give partial, artificial results, taken at a sharp angle, and which may be wrongly interpreted.

Writers, literary artists, whose course is directly the opposite of these abstract methods, would seem likely to bring the sentiment of life to the study of the people. Some of the most eminent among them have attempted this grand subject, and talent did not fail them; their success has been immense. Europe, long little inventive, receives with avidity the produce of our literature. The English scarcely write any thing now-a-days but articles in reviews: as for German books, who reads them but the Germans?

It would be worth while to examine whether these French books, which have so much popularity, so much authority, in Europe, represent France truly,—whether they have not exhibited certain exceptional, very unfavourable, shades of character,—whether these pictures, in which people see scarcely any thing but our vices and our defects, have not done our country immense harm among foreign nations. The talent, the honesty of the authors, and the well-known liberality of their principles, lent an overwhelming weight to their words. The world has received their books as a terrible judgment of France upon herself.

France has this serious point against herself,—that she shows herself naked to the nations. All others, in a manner, remain clothed and dressed. Germany,—nay even England, with all her inquiries, all her publicity, are, in comparison, little known. They cannot see themselves, not being centralised.

That which is first remarked on a naked figure, is its defects. These strike the eye at once. What would be the result, if an obliging hand placed over these very defects a magnifying glass that would make them appear colossal, and reflect upon them such a

\* This prodigious acquisition of linen, which all the manufacturers can testify, implies some acquisition of other goods and household furniture. We must not be surprised if the savings banks receive less from the workman than from the man-servant. The latter buys no goods, and but little apparel; he easily finds means to get clothed by his masters. People ought not to estimate, as they do, the progress of economy by that of the savings bank, nor believe that whatever is not paid in there, is spent in the tavern. It seems that the family—I speak especially of the wife—has desired, in preference to all else, to make clean, attractive, and agreeable, the little home which supersedes the other place of resort; hence, also, the taste for flowers, which has reached classes bordering on poverty.

pitiless light that the most natural accidents of the skin should burst forth on the horror-struck eye?

That is precisely what has happened to France. Her undoubted defects, which are amply accounted for by her unbounded activity and the shock of interests and ideas, have expanded, under the hand of her powerful writers, into monstrous forms. And behold, Europe, even now, looks upon her as a monster herself.

In the political world, nothing has better served the so-called system of cordial understanding (*l'entente des honnêtes gens*). Every aristocracy, English, Russian, or German, needs only to point out one thing as testimony against her, — viz., the portraits she makes of herself by the hand of her great writers, most of whom are friends of the people and of advancement. “Are not the people thus described, the terror of the world? Have we armies and fortresses enough to pen them up, and watch them till a favourable opportunity occurs to crush them altogether?”

Some classic and immortal novels, revealing the domestic tragedies of the wealthy classes, have firmly established in the mind of Europe, that domestic ties no longer exist in France.

Others, of great talent, and with the darkest and most fantastic colours, have represented the common life of our cities as nothing but a point round which felons, escaped from justice or the galleys, are congregated by the police.

A sketcher of manners, admirable for his genius for details, delights in depicting a horrible country *cabaret*, a tavern for rogues and thieves; and beneath this hideous sketch he boldly writes a word which is the name of most of the inhabitants of France.

Europe reads it eagerly; admires and recognises this or that petty detail. From some minute accident of which she feels the truth, she easily infers the truth of the whole.

No people could stand such a test. This singular mania of slandering one's self, of exposing one's wounds, and, as it were, courting shame, would be fatal in the long run. Many, I am aware, thus denounce the present, to hasten on a better future. They exaggerate evils, to make us enjoy the sooner that felicity which their theories are preparing for us.\* Take care, however,—take care. That is a danger-

\* Philosophers, political economists, and politicians, in these days, seem all to unite in lessening the idea of France in the mind of the people. This is most dangerous. Remember that this nation is, above all others, in the superlative sense of the term, a *true society*. Remove it from its social idea, and it becomes very weak. The people have been told, for fifty years, by all governments, that the France of the Revolution, which was their glory, their faith, was a disorder, an absurdity, a pure negation. The Revolution, on the other hand, which had obliterated ancient France, told the people that nothing of their former age

ous game. Europe inquires but little into all these clever tricks. If we call ourselves contemptible, she will perhaps take us at our word. Italy was still very powerful, even in the sixteenth century. The land of Michael Angelo and Christopher Columbus was not wanting in energy. But when she had proclaimed herself miserable and infamous by the voice of Machiavelli, the world took her at her word, and trod upon her.

We are not Italy, thank God ; and the day the world might conspire to come and take a close view of France, would be hailed by our soldiers as the finest in their lives.

Let it suffice nations to be well assured, that this nation is by no means like its pretended portraits. It is not that our great painters have always been incorrect ; but they have generally painted exceptional details, accidents at most, in each species : — the minority : the worst side of things. Grand views appeared to them too well known, trivial, and vulgar. They wanted effect ; and they have often sought it in whatever deviated from the general rule. Sprung from agitation, from commotion, so to speak, they have been gifted with passion, with a tempestuous strength, with a touch occasionally true as well as fine and strong ; but, generally, they have lacked the sense of majestic harmony.

Romantic writers had fancied that art lay especially in the horrible. These thought that the most infallible effects of art were in moral ugliness.

Erratic love has seemed to them more poetical than domestic, theft than labour, the galleys than the workshop. If they had themselves descended, by their own personal sufferings, into the profound realities of present life, they would have seen that the family circle, toil, the humblest life of the people, have in themselves a sacred poetry. To feel and represent this, is not the business of the machinist ; it is not

deserved to be remembered. Ancient France has disappeared from their memory, the new one has grown pale. It was no fault of politicians if the people did not become a *tabula rasa*, and forget themselves.

How can they be otherwise than weak at this moment ? They know not themselves ; every thing is done to make them lose the sentiment of that grand unity which was their life. They take from them their soul. Their soul was the feeling of France, as the grand brotherhood of living men, as a glorious association with our Frenchmen of the olden time. The nation contains these ages, bears them, and faintly feels them moving, yet cannot recognise them. They have not been told what that mighty whisper is, which often, like the hollow sound of an organ in a cathedral, is heard within them.

Men of reflection and study, authors, writers ! we have a holy sacred duty towards the people ! It is to lay aside our sad paradoxes, our witticisms, which have not a little assisted politicians in concealing France from the people, in obscuring their idea of her, in making them despise their native land.



necessary to accumulate here theatrical accidents. It is only necessary that we should have eyes formed for that gentle light, eyes to look into the dark, the petty, and the lowly ; and the heart too helps us to see into those corners of the hearth, those shadows of Rembrandt.

Whenever our great writers have looked there, they have been admirable. But, generally, they have turned their eyes towards the fantastic, the violent, the whimsical, the exceptional. They have not deigned to warn us that they were sketching the exception. All readers, but especially foreigners, thought they were describing the rule. They said, "The people are so."

And I, who have sprung from them, — I, who have lived, toiled, and suffered with them — who, more than any other have purchased the right to say that I know them, — I come to establish against all mankind the personality of the people.

This personality I have not taken from the surface, in its picturesque or dramatic aspects. I have not seen it from without, but experienced it within ; and, in this very experience, more than one deep quality of the people, which they possess within themselves without comprehending it, I have comprehended. Why ? Because I was able to trace it to its historical origin, and see it issue from the depths of time. Whoever will confine himself to the present, the actual, will not understand them. He who is satisfied with seeing the exterior, and painting the form, will not even be able to see it. To see it accurately, and translate it faithfully, he must know what it covers : there is no painting without anatomy.

It is not in this little book that I can teach such a science. It is sufficient for me to give—suppressing every detail, methodical, learned, and initiatory — a few observations essential in the state of our manners, — some general results.

One word only here. The chief and most prominent feature which has always struck me the most, in my long study of the people, is, that among the disorders of destitution, and the vices of misery, I have found a richness of sentiment and a goodness of heart, very rare among the wealthy classes. Every body, moreover, may have observed this. At the time of the cholera, who adopted the orphan children ? The poor.

The faculty of devotedness, the power of sacrifice, is, I confess, my standard for classing mankind. He who possesses this quality in the highest degree, is the nearest to heroism. Intellectual superiority, which proceeds partly from education, can never be put in the balance against this sovereign faculty.

To this it is generally replied : "The lower class of people have generally but little foresight ; they follow an instinct of goodness, the blind impulse of a good heart, because they do not foresee all

that it may cost them." Even if this observation were just, it by no means does away with the unremitting devotedness, the indefatigable sacrifices, which one may see so often exemplified in hard-working families, — a devotedness which is not even exhausted in the immolation of one life, but which is often continued from one to another for several generations.

I have here many excellent stories which I might relate. I cannot do so ; but I am strongly tempted, my dear friend, to tell you one story, viz., that of my own family. You are not yet acquainted with it ; we converse more frequently about philosophical or political, than about personal matters. I yield to this temptation. I have a rare opportunity of acknowledging the persevering heroic sacrifices that my family have made for me, and of thanking my relations, lowly retired people, some of whom have hid in obscurity their superior gifts, desirous to live only in me.

The two families from which I am descended, from Picardy and from Ardennes, were originally peasants, who joined a little of mechanics to their agricultural pursuits. These families being very large (twelve children in one, nineteen in the other), many of my father's and mother's brothers and sisters would not marry, in order that they might the better contribute to the education of some of the boys, whom they sent to college. This is the first sacrifice I have to notice.

In my maternal family particularly, the sisters, all remarkable for their economy, seriousness, and austerity, made themselves the humble servants of their brothers, and, to pay their way, remained buried in the village. Several, however, though uneducated, and in that wilderness, on the border of the forests, were richly endowed with natural abilities. I have heard one of them, then in the vale of years, relate the old legends of the border as well as Walter Scott. What was common to them all was great clearness of head and soundness of judgment. There were plenty of priests among their cousins and relations, priests of various sorts, worldly and fanatical ; but they had no power over them. Our sagacious and austere maidens gave them not the slightest hold. They would readily relate how one of our grand-uncles (named Michaud ? or Paillart ?) had formerly been burnt for having made a certain book.

My father's father, a music-master at Laon, gathered up his little savings, after the reign of Terror, and came to Paris, where my father was employed at the *Imprimerie des Assignats*.\* Instead of buying land, like so many others at that period, he confided what

\* The Printing Office for paper money during the Revolution, from 1789 to 1796.

he had to my father, his eldest son, and placed his all in a printing-house, at the risk of the Revolution. A brother and a sister of my father, to facilitate the arrangement, did not marry; but my father married; he espoused one of those sober damsels of Ardennes of whom I have just spoken. I was born in 1798, in the choir of a church of nuns, then occupied by our printing-office: occupied, I say, but not profaned; for what is the Press, in modern times, but the holy ark?

This printing-office prospered at first, fed by the debates of our assemblies, the news of our armies, and the bustling activity of the period. About 1800, it was overthrown by the general suppression of the newspapers. My father was allowed only to print an ecclesiastical journal; and after the undertaking had been begun at a considerable expense, the sanction was suddenly withdrawn in favour of a priest whom Napoleon thought safe, but who soon betrayed him.

We know how that great man was punished by the priests, for having believed the *consecration of Rome* better than that of France. He saw clear in 1810. Upon whom did his anger fall? Upon the Press; in two years he hurled at it sixteen decrees. My father, half-ruined by him for the profit of the priests, was then entirely so, in expiation of their fault.

One morning, we received a visit from a gentleman, more polite than the generality of the imperial agents, who informed us that his Majesty the Emperor had reduced the number of printers to sixty; the principal ones were preserved; *the smaller ones suppressed*, but with a good indemnity, at the rate of four sous for four francs. We were among these smaller ones. To be resigned, and to starve, was all that was now before us; but we were in debt. The Emperor gave us no reprieve against the Jews, as he had done for Alsatia. We had but one resource: it was to print for our creditors a few works belonging to my father. We had no longer any journeymen; we did the work ourselves. My father, who was occupied with his business abroad could not assist us; my mother, though sick, turned binder, cut and folded; I, a child, was the compositor; my grandfather, very old and feeble, betook himself to the hard work of the press, and printed with his trembling hands.

These books which we printed, and which sold pretty well, contrasted singularly by their triviality with those tragical years of immense destruction. They were only petty jokes, little games, amusements for evening parties, charades, and acrostics. There was nothing there to nourish the soul of the young compositor: but precisely the dryness, the emptiness of these miserable productions left me the more liberty. Never, I think, did I travel more in imagination, than whilst I was confined motionless in that cellar.

The more my personal romances glowed in my mind, the faster my hands went, the quicker the letters. From that time I have felt convinced that manual labours which require neither extreme delicacy, nor the exercise of much strength, are by no means shackles to the imagination. I have heard many distinguished women say, they could think and converse well only when at their needlework.

I was twelve years old, and knew nothing yet but four words of Latin, which I had picked up from an old bookseller, formerly the village teacher, who doted on grammar, a man of quaint manners, an ardent *revolutionist*, who had, nevertheless, saved, at the peril of his life, those emigrants whom he detested. At his death, he left me all he had in the world, a manuscript, a very remarkable grammar, but incomplete, having been able to devote to it only thirty or forty years.

Very lonely and very free, left entirely to myself by the excessive indulgence of my parents, I was all imagination. I had read a few books that had fallen into my hands, a *Mythology*, a *Boileau*, and a few pages of the *Imitation*.

In the excessive and incessant difficulties of my family, my mother being ill, my father so busy abroad, I had not yet received any religious education. And, behold, in those pages, I perceived suddenly, at the close of this sad world, a deliverance from death, another life and hope ! Religion thus received, without human interference, was very strong within me. I felt it to be something peculiarly my own, a thing free and living, so well mixed up with my life that it found food in every thing, strengthening itself on the way with a multitude of tender and holy things in art and poetry, which people erroneously suppose to be foreign to it.

How shall I describe the dreamy mood into which I was cast by the first words of the *Imitation* ? I did not read : I heard—as though that gentle and paternal voice addressed itself to me. I still see the large, cold, unfurnished room ; it seemed to me truly illuminated with a mysterious light. I could not go very far into this book, not understanding Christ, but I felt God. The strongest impression of my childhood next to that, was the museum of French monuments, so unfortunately destroyed. It was there, and no where else, that I first received the vivid impressions of history. I peopled these tombs with my imagination ; I felt the dead through the marble, and it was not without a feeling of awe, that I entered under the low vaults, in which slept Dagobert, Chilperic, and Frédégonda.

The scene of my labours, our workshop, was not less sombre. For some time this was a cellar, belonging to the *boulevard* where we were living, a ground floor to the street below. There I had for company, occasionally, my grandfather, when he came to see us, but

always, and without interruption, an industrious spider that worked by me, and, most certainly, more assiduously than I.

Among very severe privations, far heavier than what ordinary artisans have to support, I had some compensation,—the kindness of my parents, their faith in my future prospects, truly inexplicable, when we reflect how backward I was. Save the binding duties of my work, I enjoyed extreme independence, which I never abused. I was apprenticed, but without being in contact with coarse-minded people, whose brutality would, perhaps, have crushed the precious blossom of liberty within me. In the morning, before work, I went to my old grammarian, who gave me a task of five or six lines. I have retained thus much: that the quantity of work has much less to do with it than is supposed, children can imbibe but a little every day; like a vase with a narrow neck, pour little or pour much, you will never get a great deal in at a time.

In spite of my musical incapacity (the despair of my grandfather), I was very sensible of the majestic harmony of Latin; that grand Italic melody restored me like a ray of southern sunshine. I had been born like a blade of grass in the shade between two flag-stones of Paris. This warmth of another climate had such beneficial effects upon me, that, before knowing any thing of the quantity or learned rhythm of the ancient languages, I had sought and found, in my exercises, Romano-rural melodies, like the prose of the middle ages. A child, provided he be free, follows precisely the road pursued by infant nations.

Save the sufferings of poverty, which were very great for me in winter, that period, varied as it was with manual labour, Latin, and friendship, (I had for one moment a friend, and I speak of him in this book,) is very grateful to my memory. Rich in boyhood, imagination, and perhaps even love, I envied nobody any thing. It is my conviction that man would never know envy of himself—he must be taught it.

However, every thing became more cheerless. My mother became worse; France also (Moscow!—1813!). The indemnity was exhausted. In our extreme penury a friend of my father's proposed to get me into the imperial printing-office. What a temptation for my parents! Others would not have hesitated; but faith had ever been strong in our family: first, faith in my father, to whom all were sacrificed; then, faith in me; I was to repair all, save all.

If my parents, in obedience to reason, had made me an artisan, and saved themselves, should I then have been lost? No; I see among artisans men of much merit, men who, in point of intellect, are equal to men of letters, and in point of character their superiors. But, in short, what difficulties should I have encountered! What

a struggle against the absolute want of means ! against the fatality of the time ! My father without resources, and my mother sick, decided that I should study, happen what would.

Our situation was urgent. Knowing neither verses nor Greek, I entered upon the third form in the College of Charlemagne. My embarrassment may be conceived, having no master to assist me. My mother, so firm till then, despaired and wept. My father set about making Latin verses—he who had never made any.

The best thing still for me in that terrible passage from solitude to the crowd, from night to day, was, without all doubt, Professor Andrieu d'Alba, a kind-hearted pious man. The worst were my school-fellows. I was among them just like an owl in broad daylight, quite frightened. They found me ridiculous, and I now think they were right. I then attributed their laughter to my dress—my poverty. I began to perceive one thing, that I was poor. I thought all rich men, all men, bad ; I scarcely saw any who were not better off than myself. I pined into a misanthropic humour, rare among children. In the most deserted quarters of Paris, the *Murais*, I sought the most deserted streets. Yet amid this excessive antipathy against the human species, this good point remained—I had no envy.

My greatest delight, which restored my heart, was, on Sunday or Thursday, to read two or three times over a canto of Virgil or a book of Horace. Gradually I retained them ; in other respects I have never been able to learn a single lesson by heart. I well remember that in the midst of that thorough misery, privations of the present, fears for the future, the public enemy being at the gates (1814 !), and my own enemies daily deriding at me, one day, one Thursday morning, I sat ruminating about myself, without fire (the snow lay deep), not well knowing whether I should find bread at night, fancying it was all over with me. I had within me, but without any mixture of religious hope, a pure stoic sentiment. With my frost-bitten hand I struck my oaken table (which I have always preserved), and felt a powerfully joyous impulse of youth and future prospects. Tell me, friend, what should I fear now ? I, who have suffered death so many times in myself and in my reading ? And what should I desire ? God has given me in History the means of participating in every thing. Life has but one hold on me, that which I felt on the 12th of February last, about thirty years after. I found myself, on a similar day, equally covered with snow, opposite the same table. One thing smote my heart : “ Thou art warm—others are cold ; that is not right. Oh ! who will relieve me from this cruel inequality ? ”. Then, looking at my hand, the one which, from 1814, still shows the traces of the cold, I said to myself

for consolation, "If you were working with the people, you would not be working for them. Come, then, if you give its history to your country, I will pardon you for being happy."

\*. To return. My faith was not absurd; it was founded upon will. I believed in the future, because I was making it myself. My studies ended soon and well.\* I had the good fortune to escape two influences which ruined young men, — that of the majestic but sterile school of the Doctrinaires, and of the manufactory of literature (*littérature industrielle*), whose most miserable essays were then easily accepted by the just-reviving book-trade.

I would not live by my pen. I wanted a real occupation. I took the one my studies had prepared me for — teaching. I thought even then, with Rousseau, that literature ought to be the thing reserved, the grand luxury of life, the inward blossom of the soul. It was a great happiness for me when, in the morning, I had given my lessons, to return to my faubourg near *Père-la-chaise*, and there to read at my leisure all day long such poets as Homer, Sophocles, or Theocritus, and occasionally the historians. One of my old companions and dearest friends, M. Poret, was reading the same, about which we used to converse together in our long walks to the wood of Vincennes.

This life of ease lasted scarcely less than ten years, during which time I never imagined that I should ever write. I taught at once the languages, philosophy, and history. In 1821, I procured by competition the professorship in a college. In 1827, two works, which appeared at the same time, my *Vico* and *Précis d'Histoire Moderne*, gained me a professorship in the *Ecole Normale*.†

Teaching did me good service. The fierce trial at college had altered my character — had made me reserved and close, shy and distrustful. Marrying young, and living in great retirement, I desired less and less the society of men. That which I found in my pupils at the *Ecole Normale*, and elsewhere, once more opened and expanded my heart. Those young people, amiable and confiding, who believed in me, reconciled me to mankind. I was touched, and often sad, to see them succeed each other so rapidly before me. Hardly had I become attached to them than they departed. They are all dispersed, and several (so young!) are dead. Few have for-

\* I owed much to the encouragement of my illustrious professors, Messrs. Villemain and Leclerc. I shall always remember how M. Villemain, after the reading of a task that had pleased him, left his chair, and, under an impulse of charming sensibility, came and sat down upon the bench beside me.

† I left it with regret in 1837, when the eclectic influence prevailed there. In 1838, the *Institut* and the College of France having equally elected me for their candidate, I obtained the chair I now occupy.

gotten me ; for my part, whether they be living or dead, I shall never forget them.

They have done me, without knowing it, an immense service. If I had, as an historian, any special merit to sustain me on a level with my illustrious predecessors, I should owe it to teaching, which for me was friendship. Those great historians have been brilliant, judicious, and profound ; as for me, I have loved more.

I have also suffered more. The trials of my boyhood are always before me ; I have retained the impression of toil, of a hard laborious life ; I have remained one of the people.

I said, just now, I grew up like grass between two paving-stones ; but this grass has retained its sap as much as that of the Alps. My very solitude in Paris, my free study and my free teaching (ever free and every where the same), have raised, without altering me. They who rise, almost always lose by it ; because they become changed, they become mongrels, bastards ; they lose the originality of their own class, without gaining that of another. The difficulty is not to rise, but in rising to remain one's self.

Often, in these days, the rise and progress of the people are compared to the invasion of the *Barbarians*. The expression pleases me ; I accept it. *Barbarians* ! Yes, that is to say, full of new, living, regenerating sap. *Barbarians*, that is, travellers marching towards the Rome of the future, going on slowly, doubtless ; each generation advancing a little, halting in death ; but others march forward all the same.

We other *Barbarians* have a natural advantage ; if the upper classes have culture, we have much more vital heat. They cannot work hard, neither have they intensity, eagerness, or conscience in work. Their elegant writers, true spoiled children of the world, seem to slide upon the clouds ; or, proudly eccentric, deign not to regard the earth : how should they fertilise it ? That earth must imbibe the sweat of man, and be impressed with his heat and living virtue. Our *Barbarians* lavish all that upon her, and she loves them. On the other hand, their love is boundless and too great ; devoting themselves sometimes to details, with the delightful awkwardness of Albert Durer, or the excessive polish of Jean Jacques Rousseau, who does not sufficiently conceal his art : by this minute detail they compromise the whole. We must not blame them too much ; it is the excess of the will, the superabundance of love, occasionally the luxuriancy of the sap ; this sap, ill-directed or perplexed, wrongs itself : it wants to give every thing at once—leaves, fruit, and flowers ; it bends and twists the branches.

These defects of great workmen are often found in my books, without their good qualities. No matter ! They who come thus,



with the sap of the people, do not the less bring into art a new degree of life and *rejuvenescence*, at the very least a grand effort. They generally fix their aim higher, farther than others, scarcely consulting their strength, but rather their heart. Let it be my part in the future to have not attained, but marked, the aim of history, to have called it by a name that nobody had given it. Thierry called it *narration*, and M. Guizot *analysis*, I have named it *resurrection*, and this name will remain.

Who would be more severe than I, if I were to criticise my own works? The public has treated me too well. Do you fancy that I do not see how very imperfect this present volume is? "Why, then, do you publish it? You must have surely some very great interest at stake?" An interest? Several, as you shall see. First, I lose by it many ties of friendship. Next, I emerge from a tranquil position, entirely in unison with my tastes. I postpone my great book, the monument of my life.

"To enter public life apparently?" Never. I have estimated myself. I have neither health, nor talent for the government of men.

"Why then do you publish it?" If you really insist on knowing, I will tell you.

I speak, because nobody would speak in my stead. Not that there is not a crowd of men more capable of doing so, but all are soured, all hate. As for me, I still loved. Perhaps, also, I knew better the antecedents of France; I lived in her grand eternal life, and not in her present condition. I was more alive in sympathies, more dead in interests; I came to the questions with the disinterestedness of the dead.

I was suffering, moreover, far more than any other from the deplorable divorce that some are endeavouring to produce among men, between different classes, I who combine them all within me.

The situation of France is so serious, that there was no room for hesitation. I do not exaggerate to myself the power of a book; but the question is one of duty, by no means of ability.

Well! I see France hourly declining, engulfed like an Atlantis. Whilst we were here quarrelling, this country is swallowed up.

Who does not see, that from east to west, a shadow of death is pressing upon Europe, and that every day there is less sun; that Italy has perished, that Ireland has perished, that Poland has perished, and that Germany is bent on destruction? O Germany! Germany!

If France were dying a natural death, if her hour had come, I should perhaps be resigned; and, like a passenger on board a sinking ship, cover up my head, and commend myself to God. But her

situation is nothing like that ; and hence I am indignant ; the idea of our ruin is absurd, ridiculous ; it proceeds only from ourselves. Who has a literature ? Who still sways the mind of Europe ? We, weak as we are. Who has an army ? We alone.

England and Russia, two feeble bloated giants, impose an illusion on Europe. Great empires, weak people ! Let France be united, for an instant ; she is strong as the world.

The first thing is, that before the crisis\* we should reconnoitre ourselves well ; and have not, as in 1792 and in 1815, to alter our line, manœuvres, and system, in presence of the enemy.

The second is, that we should trust in France, and not at all in Europe.

Here, every one goes to seek friends elsewhere † : — the politician hies to London, the philosopher to Berlin, the Communist says, “ Our brother Chartists ! ” The peasant alone has preserved the tradition of salvation ; to him a Prussian is still a Prussian, an Englishman an Englishman. His common sense has been right against all of you, refined gentlemen though you are ! Your friend Prussia and your friend England drank the other day to France, the health of Waterloo ! ”

Children, children, I say unto you, — Climb up a mountain, provided it be high enough : look to the four winds, you will see nothing but enemies.

Try, then, to understand one another. That perpetual peace which some promise you whilst the arsenals are smoking ! (see that black smoke over Cronstadt and Portsmouth !) — let us try to begin that peace among ourselves. Doubtless we are divided ; but Europe believes us to be more divided than we are. That is what emboldens her. The harsh things we have to say, let us say them, — pour out our hearts, hide none of the evils, and seek well the remedies.

\* I never saw, in any history, a thirty years’ peace. The bankers, who have never foreseen any revolution (not even that of July, which many of them were preparing), reply, that there will be no stir in Europe. The first reason they give is, that *peace is profitable to the world*. To the world ! Yes ! — and but little to us. Others are running, we are walking ; we shall soon be the last (*à la queue*). Secondly, they say, “ *War can only begin with a loan ; and we will not grant it.* ” But, if it be begun with a treasure, as Russia is making one ? — if the war pays the war, as in the time of Napoleon, &c. &c. ?

† Take the most liberal, a German or an Englishman, at random, — speak to him of liberty ; he will answer, “ Liberty.” And then just try to see what they understand by it. You will then perceive that this word has as many meanings as there are nations ; that the German or English democrats are aristocrats at heart ; that the barrier of nationalities, which you believe effaced, remains almost entire. All these people, whom you believe so near, are five hundred leagues from you.

One people ! one country ! one France ! Let us never become two nations, I entreat you. Without unity, we perish. How is it that you do not perceive this ?

Frenchmen, of every condition, every class, every party, remember well one thing ! — You have on earth but one sure friend, France ! Before the ever-enduring coalition of aristocracies, you will always be guilty of one crime, — to have wished, fifty years ago, to deliver the world. They have not forgiven it, nor will they ever forget it. You are always their dread. Among yourselves, you may be distinguished by different party names ; but you are, as Frenchmen, condemned together. In the face of Europe, know that France will never have but one inexpressible name, which is her true, eternal designation, — **The Revolution !**

January 24th, 1846.

# THE PEOPLE.

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## PART I.

### ON BONDAGE AND HATRED.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### BONDAGE OF THE PEASANT.

If we would know the inmost thought, the passion of the French peasant, it is very easy. Walk, any Sunday, into the country, and follow him. Look ! there he is yonder before us ! It is two o'clock ; his wife is at vespers ; and he is in his Sunday clothes. I warrant you he is going to see his mistress.

What mistress ? His land.

I do not say he will go straight to it. No, he is free to-day ; he is at liberty to go or not to go. Does he not go often enough every day in the week ? Accordingly he turns aside, and goes elsewhere ; his business is somewhere else, and yet he goes there.

'Tis true, he was passing very near ; there was an opportunity. He now looks at it, but apparently he will not enter ; what should he do there ? And yet he goes in.

At all events, it is probable he will not work ; he has on his Sunday clothes, his blouse and clean shirt. But what prevents him from plucking up a weed, or throwing aside a stone. And then that old stump looks ugly ; but he has not his spade ; that must wait till to-morrow.

Then he folds his arms, stops, looks serious and thoughtful ; he looks a long, long time, and seems to forget himself : at last, if he fancies himself overlooked, if he perceives anybody passing, he moves slowly away ; after a few steps, he stops, turns round, and casts upon his land one last profound and melancholy look : but, to the keen-sighted, that look is full of passion, full of heart, full of devotion.

If that be not love, by what token shall we know it in this world? It is love!—do not laugh: the land will have it so, in order to produce; otherwise this poor land of France, almost without cattle and pasture, would yield nothing: it brings forth because it is loved.

The land of France belongs to fifteen or twenty millions of peasants, who cultivate it; the land of England belongs to an aristocracy of thirty-two thousand persons, who have it cultivated.\*

The English, not being equally rooted in the soil, emigrate wherever they find profit. They say country; we, native country (*patrie* †). With us, man and the soil are bound together, and will not be severed; there is between them a lawful marriage for life and death; the Frenchman has espoused France.

France is a land of equity. In doubtful cases, she has generally adjudged the land to him who tilled it.‡ England, on the contrary, has pronounced for the lord, and driven away the peasant: she is now cultivated only by workmen.

A grave moral difference! Whether property be large or small, it exalts the heart: many a man who would not have respected himself on his own account, does so on account of his property. This sentiment adds to the just pride with which our people are inspired by their unrivalled military tradition. Take at random, in that crowd, any petty day-labourer, who possesses the twentieth part of

\* And of these thirty-two thousand, twelve thousand are mortmain corporations. If, in reply to this, it be stated, that in England near three millions of persons share the landed property, the reason of it is that this word, besides the land, designates the houses, patches of ground, yards, pleasure-grounds and gardens attached to the houses, especially in the manufacturing districts.

† Our French-Englishmen say *le pays* in order to avoid saying *la patrie*. See an animated and enlightened page of M. Génin's "Variations du Langage Français," p. 417.

‡ This is one of the spiritual characters of our Revolution: man and man's work seemed to it of inestimable value, and not to be put in the scale with that of the funds: man outweighed the land. In England, the land has outweighed man. Even in districts that are in no respects feudal, but organised upon the principle of the Celtic clans, the English civilians have applied the feudal law with the greatest rigour, deciding that the lord was not only paramount, but proprietor. Thus the Duchess of Sutherland had a county of Scotland, larger than the department of the Haut-Rhin, adjudged to her, and drove out of it (from 1811 to 1820) three thousand families, who had occupied it ever since Scotland had existed. The duchess caused a trifling indemnity to be offered them, which many did not accept. Read the account of this fine operation, for which we are indebted to James Loch, the agent of the duchess: "An Account of the Bonifications made to the Domains of the Marquis of Stafford," 8vo., 1820. M. de Sismondi gives an analysis of it in his "Etudes d'Economie Politique," 183.

an acre ; you will not find in him the sentiments of a hireling ; he is a proprietor, a soldier (he has been one, and would be one to-morrow) ; his father was one of the *grande armée*.

Small properties are nothing new in France. People have erroneously imagined that they were constituted in the last crisis, and at once ; that they are accidents of the Revolution — a mistake. The Revolution found this movement far advanced, and itself sprung from it. In 1785, an excellent observer, Arthur Young, is astonished and alarmed to see the land in our country *so much divided*. In 1738, the Abbé de Saint-Pierre remarks, that in France "*Day-labourers have almost all a garden or some patch of land or vineyard*.\* In 1697, Boisguillebert deplores the necessity in which small proprietors are placed, under Louis XIV., of selling a great part of the properties acquired in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

This grand history, so little known, presents this singular character : in the very worst periods, at times of universal poverty, when even the rich are poor and are forced to sell, then the poor man finds himself able to buy ; no purchasers appearing, the peasant in rags comes forward with his piece of money, and acquires a bit of land.

Strange mystery ! That man must have a hidden treasure ! He has one, indeed : persevering toil, sobriety, and fasting. God seems to have given, as a patrimony to this indestructible race, the gift of working, fighting if necessary, without food, of living on hope, and a brave lightness of heart.

Those disastrous moments, when the peasant was able to buy land cheap, have always been followed by a sudden burst of prosperity, which was then unaccountable. About 1500, for instance, when France, exhausted by Louis XI., seemed to be crowning her ruin in Italy, the nobility, at their departure, are obliged to sell ; the land, passing into new hands, suddenly grows flourishing again ; they work and build. This bright moment (in the style of monarchical history) has been called *good Louis XII*.

Unfortunately, it lasts not long. Scarcely is the land restored to a good condition, when the exchequer pounces upon it ; next come religious wars, which seem to rase every thing to the ground † ; horrible calamities, atrocious famines, when mothers devoured their children ! Who would believe that the country would emerge again after that ? Well, then, scarcely is the war at an end when those ravaged fields,

\* Saint-Pierre, vol. x. p. 251 (Rotterdam). The authority of this author, though not weighty, is important here ; because he wrote according to the information which he had demanded of several intendants.

† See Froumentau, "*Sécrit des Finances de France*" (1581), Preuves, pp. 397, 398.

those burnt and still blackened cottages, again refund the savings of the peasant. He buys; in ten years, the aspect of France is changed: in twenty or thirty, all the estates have doubled or trebled their value. This moment, once more baptized with a royal name, is called *good Henry IV.* and *great Richelieu*.

A charming progress! what manly heart would not participate in it? Why, then, must it always stop, and so many efforts, hardly rewarded, be almost lost? The words *the poor man saves, the peasant buys*, those simple words so soon said: what toils, sacrifices, and mortal privations, it is well known, do they contain? Our brow perspires, when we observe, in detail, the divers accidents, the ups and downs in that obstinate struggle; when we see the invincible effort with which that miserable man has seized, let go, and again grasped the land of France: as the poor shipwrecked mariner, who touches the shore, holds on, but the wave ever drags him back into the sea; again he grasps it, maimed and bruised, but he still clings to the rock with his bleeding hands.

This movement, I am obliged to say so, declined, or stopped. about 1650. The nobles who had sold, found means to redeem at a low rate. The very time our Italian ministers, a Mazarin, or an Emeri, were doubling the taxes, the nobles, who crowded the court, easily got off; so that the double burden fell directly upon the shoulders of the feeble and the poor, who were absolutely obliged to sell or give this scarcely acquired land, and again become hirelings, tenants, farmers, labourers. By what incredible efforts could they, during the wars and bankruptcies of the great king and the regent, keep or get back the lands, which, we have seen, were in their hands in the eighteenth century? This is what is inexplicable. I beg and beseech those who make us laws, or enforce them, to read the detail of the fatal re-action of Mazarin and Louis XIV., in those pages, full of indignation and sorrow, in which it has been embodied by a great citizen, Pesant de Boisguillebert.\* May that history warn them, at a moment when divers influences are eagerly at work, to suppress the main work of France — the acquisition of land by the labourer!

\* A great citizen, an eloquent writer, and a practical genius, whom we must not confound with the Utopians of that period. The idea of the *royal tithe* has been erroneously attributed to him. What can be bolder than the commencement of his "Factum," and, at the same time, what more painful? It is the deep sigh of the agony of France. Boisguillebert published it in March, 1707, when Vauban had just been condemned, in February, for a book far less daring. Why has this heroic man not yet a statue at Rouen, that received him in triumph on his return from exile? (Lately reprinted in the "Collection des Economistes.")

Our magistrates especially have need to enlighten themselves in this matter to fortify their conscience, for knavery besieges them. Large proprietors, awakened from their natural apathy by the lawyers, have latterly rushed into a thousand unjust lawsuits. There has been created against the *communes* and small proprietors a species of antiquarian advocates, who are working all together in the falsification of history to deceive justice. They know that judges rarely have time to examine their lying fabrications. They know that those whom they attack have scarcely ever any regular title-deeds. The *communes* especially have either kept them carelessly, or have never had any. Why? Precisely because their right is often very ancient, and of a date when people trusted to tradition.

In all the districts, on the frontier especially \*, the rights of the poor peasants are so much the more sacred, as nobody without them would have inhabited such dangerous ground; the land would have been deserted; there would have been neither people nor cultivation. And behold now, at a time of peace and security, you come and dispute the possession with those without whom the land did not exist! You demand their title-deeds, but they are buried; they are the bones of their ancestors who guarded your frontier, and who even now occupy the sacred boundary.

In more than one province of France the cultivator has a right, which is certainly the first of all, that of having created the land. I speak not metaphorically. Behold those parched rocks, those arid hills in the south. I ask you where would the land be there without man? Property there is entirely in the proprietor. It lies in the indefatigable arm that breaks the flint-stones all day long, and mixes the dust with a little earth. It lies in the strong back of the vine-dresser, who, from the bottom of the hill, is ever banking up his field that is always wasting away. It lies in the docility, the patient ardour of the wife and child, who draw the plough with an ass. A painful sight! and Nature herself sympathises with them. The little vine takes root between the rocks: the chesnut—sober and courageous tree—flourishes without soil, by grasping the pure flint with its roots; it seems to live on air, and, like its master, to produce even fasting.† Yes, man makes the land: this may be said

\* Add, moreover, that in the middle ages, in the division of so many provinces, *seigneuries*, and fiefs, seeming to form so many states, the *frontier was everywhere*. Even at a later period the English frontier was in the centre of France, in Poitou till the thirteenth century, in Limousin till the fourteenth, &c.

† I felt all that when, in the month of May, 1844, in going from Nismes to Puy, I passed through Ardèche, that barren country where man has created every thing. Nature had made it frightful; but, thanks to him, it is now



even of the least barren countries. Let us never forget this, if we wish to know how much and how passionately he loves it. Let us reflect that for centuries generations have devoted to it the sweat of their brow, the bones of the dead, their savings, and their food. That land, where man has so long deposited the best part of man, his sap and his substance, his efforts, and his virtue:—that land he feels is human, and he loves it like a human being.

He loves it: to acquire it he consents to any thing, even to lose sight of it: he emigrates, goes abroad, if necessary, sustained by this thought and this reminiscence. Of what, think you, is that poor Savoyard errand-boy dreaming, as he sits upon the step at your door? He is musing about the little field of rye, or meagre pasture, that he hopes to buy on his return to his native mountains. It will take ten years! No matter\*; to get land in seven years the Alsatian sells his life, and goes to meet death in Africa.† To have a few feet of vineyard, the woman of Burgundy tears her breast from the mouth of her own child, puts a stranger's child in its place, and weans her own too soon. "My child!" says the father, "either you will live or die: but if you live you shall have a bit of land!"

Is it not cruel, nay, almost impious, to speak thus? Reflect well before you decide. "You shall have a bit of land," means, "You shall not be a mercenary, to be hired to-day and turned off to-morrow; you shall not be a serf for your daily bread; you shall be free!" Free! glorious word! comprising, indeed, all human dignity. There is no virtue without liberty.

Poets have often spoken of the attractions of water, those dangerous fascinations which allured the imprudent fisherman. More dan-

charming,—charming in May, and even then always rather austere, but possessing a moral charm so much the more touching. There nobody will say that the *seigneur* has given the land to the *villain*; there was none to give. Accordingly, how my heart was wounded to see still, upon the heights, those dreadful dark towers which so long levied tribute on people so poor, so deserving, and who owe nought but to themselves. The monuments for me, those which relieved my eyes, were the humble houses of stone and flint in the valley where the peasants dwell. Those houses have a very sombre, nay, sad aspect with their poor, little, meagre, ill-watered gardens; but the arcades which support them, the large flight of steps, and the spacious landing under the arcades, give them much character. It happened to be the very moment of the vintage. At that fine season they were making silk, and the poor country seemed rich; every house showed beneath its sombre arcade, a maiden winding skeins, who, tapping the pedal of the winder with her foot, smiled with her pretty white teeth, and wound off her golden skein.

\* Léon Faucher, *La Colonie des Savoyards à Paris*, *Revue des Deux-Mondes*, Nov. 1834, iv. 343.

† See further, p. 28. note.

gerous still, if possible, is the attraction of land. Large or small, it has ever this strange, attracting quality, that it is always incomplete—it always wants *enlarging*. There is wanting but very little, only that side, or still less, that corner. 'There's the temptation; to enlarge, buy, borrow. "Lay by, if you can; do not borrow," says Reason. But that is too slow. Then, "Borrow!" says Passion. The proprietor, a timid man, does not like lending; though the peasant shows him a very clear and till now unencumbered land, he is afraid lest a woman, a ward (for such are our laws), should spring up, whose superior rights may outweigh the whole value of the loan. Hence he dares not lend. Who, then, will? The usurer of the place, or the lawyer who has all the peasant's documents, who knows his business better than himself, who knows, too, that he runs no risk, and who will be kind enough, out of friendship—to accommodate him?—No; but to procure him a loan at seven, eight, and ten per cent.!

Is he to accept that fatal money? His wife is seldom of that opinion. His grandfather, if he consulted him, would not recommend it. His forefathers, our old French peasants, most assuredly would not have done so. That humble patient race never calculated on aught but their own savings; a sou which they retrenched from their daily food, or the small coin they sometimes saved in returning from market, and which, the same night, went (as one still finds) to repose with its fellows at the bottom of a pot buried in the cellar.

Our peasant is no longer that man; his heart is more aspiring; he has been a soldier. The grand things he has achieved in this age have accustomed him to believe easily in impossibilities. This acquisition of land is for him a combat; he goes to it as he would to the charge, and will not retreat. It is his battle of Austerlitz; he will win it; it will be a desperate struggle, he knows, but he has seen plenty of these under his old commander.

If he fought with a good heart when there was nothing to be gained but wounds, think you he will go softly to work in this struggle for land? Watch him before daylight; you will find him at work, with all his family; and even his wife, scarcely out of her confinement, creeping along the dewy earth. At noon, when rocks split with the heat, when the planter's negro gets repose, the volunteer negro takes none. Behold his food; and compare it with the artisan's; the latter feeds better every day than the peasant on Sunday.

This heroic man thought that by the power of his will he could do any thing, even suppress time. But there is a difference between this and war; time is not to be suppressed; it weighs heavy; the

struggle lasts and is prolonged between usury, which time accumulates, and the strength of man, which it diminishes. The land brings him in two per cent., and usury demands eight; that is to say, usury is fighting against him like four men against one. Every year's interest wipes away four years' work.

Are you now surprised that this Frenchman, this merry singer of former days no longer smiles! Are you surprised, if, meeting him on that land which devours him, you find him so gloomy! In passing you salute him cordially; he will not see you, but slouches his hat. Do not ask him the way; if he answers, he may perhaps make you turn your back on the place you are going to.

Thus the peasant becomes more and more bitter and retiring. His heart is too much oppressed to open it to any sentiment of benevolence. He hates the rich, his neighbour, and the world. Alone, in this miserable property, as in a desert island, he becomes a savage. His insociability, proceeding from the feeling of his misery, renders it irremediable; it prevents him from being on a kindly footing with those who ought to be his helpmates and natural friends\*, the other peasants; he would sooner die than advance one step towards them. On the other hand, the townsman has no desire to approach that fierce-looking man; he is almost afraid of him. "The peasant is malicious, spiteful, capable of any enormity. It is not safe to be his neighbour."

Thus, the more wealthy class become more and more distant; they pass some time in the country, but do not settle there; their home is in town. They leave the field open to the village-banker and the lawyer, the secret confessor of all, who preys on all. "I will no longer have any dealings with those people," says the proprietor; "the notary shall arrange every thing; I leave it with him; he shall settle with me, and give out and divide the rent as he pleases." The notary, in many places, thus becomes the sole farmer, the only medium between the rich proprietor and the labourer. A great misfortune for the peasant. To escape from the thralldom of the proprietor, who would generally wait, and was long satisfied with promises, he has taken, for his master, the lawyer, the monied man, who knows only when a bill is due.

The proprietor's unkindly feelings seldom fail to be justified to him by the pious personages whom his wife receives. The materialism of the peasant is the usual text of their lamentations: "Impious, material age!" say they; "those people love but the land!"

\* I shall speak farther of association. As to the economical advantages and disadvantages of small properties, which are foreign to my subject, — see Gasparin, Passy, Dureau De Lamalle, &c.

that is all their religion ! They adore only the manure of their fields !” Miserable Pharisees ! if this land were merely land, they would not purchase it at such desperate prices ; it would not drag them into this madness, this illusion. You, spiritual and any thing but material men, no one would ever catch you at it ; you calculate, within a franc, what each field yields in corn or wine. Yet he, the peasant, adds to it an infinite price in imagination ; it is he who, in this, allows too much to the imagination, he is the poet. In this vile, obscure, and filthy land, he distinctly sees the gold of liberty gleaming. Liberty, for him who knows the forced vices of the slave, is virtue (*la vertu possible*). A family, who from hirelings become proprietors, respect themselves, rise in their own esteem, and change altogether ; they reap from their land a harvest of virtues : the father’s sobriety, the mother’s economy, the son’s brave toil, the daughter’s chastity, — all those fruits of liberty. Are these, I ask, material possessions ? Are these treasures that can be bought too dearly ? \*

Men of the past, who call yourselves men of faith, if you are so indeed, own that that was a faith which, in our own days, by the arms of this people, defended the liberty of the world against the world itself. Be not, I entreat you, for ever prating of chivalry. That was a chivalry, and the proudest chivalry ; viz. that of our peasant soldiers. It is said the Revolution has suppressed the nobility ; but it is just the reverse ; it has made thirty-four millions of nobles. When an emigrant was boasting of the glory of his ancestors, a peasant, who had been successful in the field, replied, “ I am an ancestor ! ”

This people is noble, by reason of those grand doings ; Europe has remained plebeian. But we must take serious measures for defending this nobility ; it is in danger. The peasant, on becoming the serf of the usurer, would not only be miserable, but would lose heart. Think you that that man, a sad, restless, trembling debtor, afraid to meet his creditor, and skulking about, preserves much courage ? How would it be with a race thus brought up, in awe of the Jews, and whose emotions are those of arrest, seizure, and ejection ?

The laws must be altered ; law must undergo this high moral and political necessity.

\* The peasant does not get off so. After the priest comes the artist, the neo-catholic artist, to slander him : that impotent race of weeping mourners of the middle ages, who know only how to weep and copy — to weep for stones ; for, as for men, let them starve, if they will. As if the merit of those stones was not to remind us of man, and bear his impress. The peasant, to such people, is nothing but a demolisher ; every old wall he throws down, every stone moved by the plough, is an incomparable ruin.

If you were Germans or Italians, I should say, "Consult the civilians; you have only to observe the rules of civil equity." But you are France; you are not a nation only, but a principle, a great political principle. It must be defended at any cost. As a principle, you must live. Live for the salvation of the world!

In the second rank by industry, you are in the first in Europe by that vast and profound legion of peasant-soldier-proprietors; the strongest foundation that any nation has had since the Roman empire. It is by that that France is formidable to the world, and at the same time ready to aid it; it is this that it looks upon with fear and hope. What, in fact, is it? The army of the future on the day the Barbarians appear.

One thing comforts our enemies, which is, that this great dumb France, which is undermost, has been for a long time swayed by a petty, noisy, meddling France. No government, since the Revolution, has taken the agricultural interest into consideration. Industry, the younger sister of Agriculture, has put the elder out of mind. The Restoration favoured landed property, but only the great properties. Even Napoleon, so dear to the peasant, whom he well understood, began by abolishing the duties which affected the capitalist and relieved the land; he effaced the mortgage laws which the Revolution had made to bring money within the reach of the labourer.

At present, the capitalist and the manufacturer govern alone. Agriculture, which goes for more than half in our income, receives only a hundred and eighth part in our expenditure! It is not much worse treated by government than by political economists, who are especially anxious about manufactories and manufacturers. Several of our economists speak of the *labourer* (*travailleur*) instead of the workman (*ouvrier*), forgetting only twenty-four millions of agricultural labourers.

And yet the peasant is not only the most numerous class of the nation, but the strongest, the most healthy, and, if we fairly weigh the physical with the moral, on the whole the best.\* In the decline of the belief which formerly sustained him, left to himself, between the old faith which he no longer has, and the modern light which is not given to him, he preserves for his support the national sentiment, the grand military tradition, something of the honour of the soldier. He is self-interested, churlish in business, no doubt; who can blame him, when we know what he suffers? Such as he is, though he may occasionally be blamed, compare him,

\* The town population, which constitutes but one-fifth of the nation, affords two-fifths of the criminals.

I pray you, in ordinary life, with your tradespeople, who lie all day long, and with the manufacturing vulgar.

Man of the land, and living wholly in it, he seems formed in its image. Like it, he is greedy; the land never says, "Enough!" He is as obstinate as the land is firm and constant; he is patient, like it, and not less indestructible; every thing passes away, but he remains! Do you call this having faults? Ah! if he had them not, you would long have had no France.

Would you form any idea of our peasants? Behold them, on their return from military service! You see those terrible soldiers, the first in the world, who scarcely landed from Africa, from the war of lions, set quietly to work between their mother and sister, resume the paternal life of saving and fasting, and no longer wage war but against themselves. You behold them, without either violence or repining, seeking by the most honourable means the accomplishment of the holy work which constitutes the strength of France: I mean, marriage between man and the soil.

The whole of France, if she had the true feeling of her mission, would help those who are carrying on this work. By what fatality must she to-day stop short in their hands! \* If the present state of things continued, the peasant, far from acquiring, would sell, as he did in the middle of the seventeenth century, and once more become a hireling. Two hundred years lost! That would be, not the downfall of a class, but of our country.

They pay more than five hundred millions (of francs) to the state every year, and a thousand millions to the usurers! Is that all? No, the indirect charge is, perhaps, as heavy, that, viz., which industry imposes on the peasant by its custom-duties, which, keeping out foreign produce, prevent also our merchandise from being exported.

These men, so laborious, are the worst fed. They get no meat; our cattle-breeders (who are manufacturers in an abstract sense) prevent the agriculturist from eating any†, alleging the *interest of*

\* She is stopping, or even receding. M. Hipp. Passy assures us (*Mém. Acad. Polit.* vol. ii. p. 301.) that from 1815 to 1835, the number of proprietors, compared with that of the rest of the population, has diminished  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., or *one fortieth*. He goes by the census of 1815. But is that census exact? Is it more important than that of 1826, than the tables of the increase and decrease of the population during the Empire, &c.? — See Villermé, *Journal des Economistes*, No. 42. May, 1845.

† And who sell him at so high a price his only cow and his working oxen. The breeders say, "No agriculturists without manure, no manure without cattle." They are right, but argue against themselves. Changing nothing and improving nothing (except for productions of luxury, and the triumphs of vanity), maintaining high prices for inferior articles, they prevent all the poorer countries from buying the little cattle which suits them, and obtaining the necessary manure; man and the land, not being able to recruit their strength, languish from exhaustion.

*agriculture.* The lowest workman eats white bread ; but he who grows the corn eats only brown. They make the wine, and the townsman drinks it. Nay more, the whole world drinks joy at the cup of France, save the French vine-dresser.\*

The manufactures of our towns have recently received a considerable relief, the weight of which recoils upon the land, at a moment when the smaller industry of the country, the humble work of the spinning-girl, is devoured by the flax machine.

The peasant, thus losing, one by one, his trades of industry, to-day flax, to-morrow silk perhaps, can with difficulty keep his land. It escapes from him, carrying along with it all the fruits of his laborious years, savings, and sacrifices. He is ejected from his very life. If any thing remain, speculators ease him of it ; he listens, with the credulity of misfortune, to all the fables they promulgate. Algiers produces sugar and coffee ; every man in America earns ten francs a day ; one must emigrate ; what does it signify ? The Alsatian believes them when he is told that the ocean is scarcely broader than the Rhine.†

\* One may remember the calculation of Paul Louis Courrier who found, that, in the gross, the acre of vine produced 6l. to the vine-planter, and 52l. to the treasury. This is an exaggeration. But, as a set-off, we must add that this acre is now much more in debt than in 1820. There is no occupation more laborious, however, or more worthy of its hire. Pass through Burgundy in spring, or autumn ; you travel for forty leagues over a country twice a year dug, turned up, unplanted, and replanted with vine props. What labour ! And in order that this produce, so dearly obtained, may be adulterated and dishonoured at Berry and Rouen, an infamous art calumniate nature and this excellent beverage ; the wine is as ill-treated as the vine-grower.

† This is what an Alsatian said to a friend of mine (September, 1845). Our Alsacians who emigrate thus, sell, in departing, the little they possess ; the Jew is at hand ready to buy. The Germans endeavour to carry their goods away with them ; they travel in waggons, like the barbarians who emigrated into the Roman Empire. I remember once, in Suabia, on a very hot dusty day, I met one of these emigrating waggons, full of chests, furniture, and effects, heaped all together. Behind, a very small waggon, attached to the large one, conveyed an infant two years old, of a sweet expression of countenance. It thus went along, weeping, under the care of a little sister, who walked beside it, but was unable to pacify it. Some women having blamed the parents for leaving their infant behind, the father sent his wife down to fetch it. Those people seem to me to be both dejected, almost insensible, prematurely dead, through misery ? — or regret ? Could they ever reach their destination ? It was scarcely probable. And the infant, would its frail carriage last through that long journey ? I durst not ask myself. Only one member of that family seemed to me alive and life-like, it was a boy about fourteen, who, even at that moment, was putting on the drag for going down hill. That boy with black hair, and a serious but impassioned countenance, seemed full of moral strength and ardour ; at least I thought so. He already felt himself the head of a

Before going to that extremity, before quitting France, every resource will be employed. The son will sell himself\*, the daughter turn servant, the young child enter the nearest manufactory, and the wife place herself as wet-nurse in the citizen's house†, or take to her own home the infant of the small shop-keeper, or even of the labourer.

The artisan, if he does but gain a pretty good livelihood, is the object of the peasant's envy. He who calls the manufacturer "master" (*bourgeois*), is himself a master in the estimation of the countryman. The latter sees him on Sunday walking about dressed like a gentleman. He himself attached to the land, believes that a man who carries his trade about with him, who works without caring about the seasons, frost or snow, is as free as a bird. He knows not, and will not see the slavery of the manufacturer. He judges of him by the young travelling artisan whom he meets on the roads, making his tour of France, and who, at every halt, gains enough for his lodging and his journey; and then, resuming his long walking-stick and his knapsack, marches towards another town, singing as he goes along.

family, their provider, and charged with their safety. The real mother was the sister; she performed the part of one. The little one, weeping in his cradle, had also his part, and not the least important; he was the unity of the family, the bond between the brother and sister, their common foster child; in his little osier waggon, he was transporting the domestic hearth and the father-land; there, if he lived, Suabia would still be found, even in an unborn world. Alas! how much will these children have to do and to suffer! In looking at the eldest, and his beautiful serious countenance, I blessed him from my heart, and gave him as much as was in my power.

\* These substitutes are too much despised. M. Vivien who, as a Member of the Commission of the Chamber, has made an inquiry upon this subject, has done me the honour to inform me that their motives were often very laudable: to succour their family, acquire a small property, &c.

† No painter of morals, novelist, or political economist, as far as I know, has deigned to speak to us of the wet-nurse. There is, however, there a sad story, not sufficiently known! People do not know how much these poor women are speculated upon and unfairly used, first by the conveyances which transport them (often barely out of their confinement), and afterwards by the servants' office (*bureau*) which receives them. When taken as nurses, *on the spot*, they must send away their own child, who often dies in consequence. They have no binding agreement with the family that hires them, and may be sent away at the first caprice of the mother, the monthly nurse, or the doctor; if the change of air and living should dry up the source of their milk, they are discharged without any indemnity. If they remain, they contract habits of idleness, and suffer extremely when they are obliged to return to their life of poverty; several become servants, in order never to leave the town; they never rejoin their husbands again, and the family is broken up.



## CHAPTER II.

## BONDAGE OF THE WORKMAN DEPENDENT ON MACHINERY.

“How brilliant is the city ! How sad and poor is the country !” That is what you hear the peasants say, who come to see the town on holidays. They do not know that if the country is *poor*, the city, with all its splendour, is perhaps more *misérable*.\* Few people, moreover, make this distinction.

On Sunday, observe at the city gates (*barrières*), those two crowds moving in opposite directions ; the artizan towards the country, the peasant towards town. Between those two seemingly analogous movements, there is a great difference. The peasant’s is not a simple walk ; he admires every thing in the town, desires all, and will remain there if he can.

Let him consider. One seldom returns to the country after once leaving it. They who come as servants, and partake of most of their masters’ pleasures, by no means care to return to their life of abstinence. Should those who become workmen in manufactories desire to return to the country, they could not ; they are speedily enervated, and incapable of enduring severe toil, or the sudden variations of heat and cold ; the open air would kill them.

But if the city is so absorbing, it seems that it ought not to be too much blamed for it ; to the best of its power, it keeps away the peasant by high duties and the enormous prices of provisions. Besieged by these crowds, it thus attempts to drive off her assailants. But nothing deters them ; no terms are hard enough. They will come in, in whatever character they please ; as servant, workman, mere machine assistant, and himself a machine. One is reminded of those ancient Italic nations, who, in their frantic desire of entering Rome, sold themselves for slaves in order, at a later period, to become freedmen and citizens.

The peasant does not allow himself to be intimidated by the repinings of the artizan, or by the terrible descriptions he receives of his situation. He does not understand, he who earns one or two francs, how, with wages at three, four, or five francs, one can be miserable. “But the fluctuations of work, and the want of work ?”

\* A distinction very cleverly set forth in the work of the esteemed and regretted M. Buret : “*De la Misère*,” &c. 1840. In this work he has, perhaps, adopted too readily the exaggerations of the English inquiries.

What does it signify? He used to economise out of his small earnings; how much more easily, then, out of so large a salary, will he lay by for a rainy day!

But, apart from wages, surely life is more agreeable in town. There, people generally work under cover; that alone, the having a roof over one's head, seems a great improvement. Without speaking of the heat, the cold of our climate is a punishment for those even who seem the most accustomed to it. For my part, I have spent many winters without a fire, without being less sensible of the cold. When the frost was over, I felt a happiness to which few enjoyments are comparable. Spring was a delight. These changes of seasons, so indifferent for the rich, constitute the bases of the poor man's life — his real events.

The peasant, by living in town, is better off in regard to food; it is, if not more wholesome, at least more savoury. It is not uncommon, in the first months of his residence, to see him grow fat. To counterpoise this, his complexion changes, and not for the better. What has he lost, in his removal? something most vital and even nutritious, which alone explains how country workmen remain strong even on food but little nutritious,—this is pure, free air, refreshed without ceasing, and renewed by vegetable perfumes. That the air in town is as unwholesome as is alleged, I do not believe; but it most assuredly is so in the miserable lodgings where so many poor workmen are pent up every night between wenches and thieves.

The peasant little expected this; nor did he calculate that, in earning more money, he was losing his treasure,—his sobriety, parsimony, nay, avarice, if we must speak frankly. It is easy to be saving far from temptations to spend, when only one pleasure occurs, that of saving. But how very difficult is it,—what resolution, what self-possession does it require, to keep money close, and your pocket buttoned, when every thing entices to open it! Add, also, that the savings bank, keeping an invisible treasure, by no means imparts those emotions which the peasant feels in burying and digging up his treasure with so much pleasure, mystery, and fear: still less has it the charms of a nice piece of land, always to be seen, always to be dug, and always wanting to be enlarged.

Indeed, the workman needs a fund of virtue to be saving. If he be a simple, good-natured fellow, and easily entrapped into company, a thousand various expenses,—the *cabaret*, the *café*, and so forth,—leave him penniless. If he be serious and honest, he marries at some prosperous moment, when work is plentiful: the wife earns little at first, but nothing when she has children; the husband, well off when he was single, knows not how to meet this certain overwhelming every-day expenditure.

Besides the town imposts (*droits d'entrée*), there was formerly another obstacle which barred the peasant from towns, and prevented him from turning workman: this barrier was the difficulty of entering into any trade, the length of apprenticeship, the spirit of exclusion in fraternities and corporations. Manufacturing families took few apprentices—and those chiefly their own children, whom they mutually exchanged. But now new occupations have been created, requiring scarcely any apprenticeship, and taking any man. The real workman, in these trades, is machinery: it is not necessary for man to have much strength or skill; he is there only to superintend and aid that iron workman.

• This unfortunate class of population, enslaved to machinery, comprises four hundred thousand souls, or rather more.\* It is about the fifteenth part of our workmen. Whoever knows no kind of work, comes and offers himself to the manufactories to serve ma-

\* They who enlarge this figure, include in it workmen occupied, it is true, in manufactories which employ machinery, but not enslaved to machines. These men are, and ever will be, an exception. Is the extension of *machinism* (to designate this system by a word) to be feared? Ought machinery to invade every thing? Will France become, in this respect, another England? To these grave questions I answer unhesitatingly, No; we must not judge of the extension of this system by the epoch of the great European war when it was over-excited by the extravagant premiums which are not afforded by ordinary trade. Eminently fitted to lower the price of objects that are to descend among all classes, it has supplied an immense want, that of the lower classes, who, at a time of rapid ascension, wanted at once to have comforts, even to make a showy appearance; but remaining satisfied with a shabby genteel, often vulgar, and, what we call, *de fabrique* style. Though, by an admirable effort, manufactures have risen to very fine and un-hoped-for results, these products, manufactured wholesale and by uniform means, are immediately stamped with a monotonous character. The progress of taste renders this monotony sensible, and causes it sometimes to be wearisome. Many an irregular work of the non-mechanical arts charms the eye and the mind, more than those faultless manufactured *chefs-d'œuvre* which, by the absence of life, remind us of the substance from which they were generated,—steam.

Add, moreover, that every man now will no longer be of *such a class*, but *such a man*,—he wants to be himself; consequently, he must care less for the products fabricated *by classes*, without any individuality which speaks to his own. The world is advancing in this direction; each wishes, in better comprehending *generality* at the same time, to characterise his own *individuality*. It is very likely that, all things else remaining equal, people will prefer to the uniform fabrications of machinery the incessantly diversified products which bear the impress of human personality; which to suit man, and change, as he changes, should spring immediately from man.—Therein is the real future prospect of manufacturing France, much rather than in mechanical fabrication wherein she remains inferior.—Moreover, the two systems lend each other mutual assistance. The more cheaply first wants will be satisfied by machinery, the more will taste rise above the products of *machinism*, and seek the products of an entirely personal art.

chines. The greater their number, the more their wages lower, and the more miserable they become. On the other hand, merchandise thus cheaply fabricated, descends within the reach of the poor, so that the misery of the machine-workman somewhat diminishes the misery of the artisan and peasant, who are, in all probability, seventy-fold more numerous.

This is what we saw in 1842. Spinning was at its last gasp, — stifled ; the warehouse choke-full, and no sale. The terrified manufacturer durst neither work nor cease working, with those devouring machines ; but usury does not stand still ; he worked, therefore, half-days, and incumbered the incumbrance. Prices were lowering, — all in vain ; they lowered till cotton had fallen to six sous. Then something unexpected occurred. The words *six sous* aroused the people. Millions of purchasers, poor people who never bought any thing, began to stir. Then we saw what an immense and powerful consumer the people is, when they interfere. The warehouses were emptied in a moment : machinery began to work again with fury, chimneys to smoke. It was a revolution in France, little noted, but great ; a revolution in cleanliness ; a sudden embellishment in the homes of the poor, — body linen, bed linen, table linen, and window curtains ; whole classes had them who had had none since the beginning of the world.

It is sufficiently understood, without further example : machinery, which seems an entirely aristocratical power by the centralisation of capital which it supposes, is, nevertheless, by the cheapness and the *vulgarisation* of its products, a very powerful agent of democratical progress ; it brings within the reach of the poor a world of objects of utility, of luxury even, and of art, which they could never approach. Wool, thank God, has everywhere descended among the people, and warms them, and silk is beginning to adorn them. But the great and capital revolution has been cotton prints. It has required the combined efforts of science and art to force that rebellious and ungrateful tissue, cotton, to undergo every day so many brilliant transformations ; to diffuse it everywhere, when thus transformed, and put it within the reach of the poor. Every woman wore formerly a blue or black gown, which she kept ten years without washing, for fear it might tear to pieces. But now her husband, a poor workman, with the value of a day's work covers her with a garment of flowers. All that female population, who now present on our *promenades* an iris of a thousand colours, were, till lately, all in mourning. Of these changes, which are thought futile, the bearing is immense. They are not simple material ameliorations, but a progress of the people in their exterior and appearance, by which men judge one another among themselves ; it is, so to speak, *visible*

*equality.* Thereby they rise to new ideas which otherwise they did not reach ; fashion and taste are, for them, an initiation into art. Add, what is still more important, that dress imposes even on the wearer ; he wants to be worthy of it, and endeavours to correspond to it by his moral behaviour.

It requires no less, indeed, than this progress of all, — the evident advantage of the masses, — to make us accept the hard condition with which we must purchase it, that of having, amid a population of men, a miserable little tribe of men-machines, living but half a life, producing wonderful things, but not reproducing themselves, who propagate only for death, and perpetuate their class only by incessantly absorbing other populations who are engulfed there for ever.

To have, in machines, created creators, powerful workmen, who invariably pursue the work once imposed upon them, is certainly a grand temptation to pride. But, on the other hand, what humiliation to behold, in presence of machinery, man fallen so low ! The head is giddy, and the heart oppressed, when, for the first time, we visit those fairy halls, where iron and copper of a dazzling polish, seem going of themselves, and to have both thought and will, whilst pale and feeble man is the humble servant of those giants of steel. "Behold," said a manufacturer to me, "that ingenious and powerful machine, which takes vile rags, and after passing them, without ever making any mistake, through the most complicated transformations, turns them into tissue as fine as the most beautiful silk of Verona !" I admired in sadness ; it was impossible for me not to see at the same time those pitiable human faces, those faded young girls, those crooked or dropsical-looking children.

Many people of keen sensibility, not to be the martyrs of their compassion, silence it by saying off-hand that this population presents so sad an appearance only because it is bad, spoiled, radically corrupt. They judge of it, generally, at the moment when it is the most shocking to the sight ; according to the aspect it presents on leaving the manufactory, when the bell casts them forth into the street. This exit is always noisy. The men speak very loud ; you would fancy they were quarrelling : the girls scream to one another with discordant hoarse voices : the children fight and throw stones, and are violent in their behaviour. This spectacle is not pleasing to behold ; the passengers turn aside ; the ladies are afraid, fancy a riot is at hand, and take another street.

We must not turn aside. We must enter the manufactory whilst it is working, and then we understand how that silence, that captivity during long hours, enjoin, at their exit, noise, cries, and movement for the re-establishment of the vital equilibrium. That is especially true for the great spinning and weaving workshops, — that real hell of

*ennui.* *Ever, ever, ever,* is the unvarying word thundering in your ears from the automatic rumbling of wheels shaking the very floor. Never can one get habituated to it. At the end of twenty years, as on the first day, the *ennui*, the giddiness, and the nausea, are the same. Does the heart beat in that crowd? Very little; its action is as if suspended; it seems, during those long hours, as if another heart, common to all, has taken its place, — a metallic, indifferent, pitiless heart; — and that this loud rumbling noise, deafening in its regularity, is only its beating.

The solitary task of the weaver was far less painful. Why? Because he could muse. Machinery allows no reverie, no musing. Would you for a moment lessen the movement, with liberty to increase it afterwards, you could not. The indefatigable chariot, with its hundred spindles, is scarcely thrust back before it returns to you. The hand-weaver weaves fast or slow, even as he breathes; he acts as he lives; the occupation conforms to man. But there, on the contrary, man must conform to the occupation; and the being of flesh and blood, in whom life varies with the hours, must submit to the unchangeableness of this being of steel.

It happens in the manual labours subject to our impulse, that our inmost thought becomes identified with the work, puts it in its proper place, and the inert instrument, to which we impart the movement, far from being an obstacle to the spiritual movement, becomes its aid and companion. The mystic weavers of the middle ages were famous under the name of *Lollards*, because, in fact, whilst working, they *lulled*, or sang in a low tone, some nursery rhyme, at least in spirit. The rhythm of the shuttle, pushed forth and pulled back at equal periods, associated itself with the rhythm of the heart; in the evening it often happened that, together with the cloth, a hymn, a lamentation, was woven to the self-same numbers.

What a change, then, for him who is forced to leave domestic work to enter the manufactory! To quit his poor home, the worm-eaten furniture of the family, so many old cherished objects, is hard; but harder still is it to renounce the free possession of his soul. Those vast workshops, so white, so new, and inundated with light, pain the eye accustomed to the shade of an obscure dwelling. There, there is no obscurity into which the mind may plunge; no dark angle where the imagination may suspend its dream; no illusion possible, in such a glare of light, which is incessantly warning him cruelly of the reality. Let us not wonder if our weavers of Rouen\*,

\* The will and testament of the Rouen weavers is the remarkable little book written by one of them: Noiret, "*Mémoires d'un Ouvrier Rouennais*," 1836. He declares that they no longer take any apprentices.

and our French weavers in London, have resisted this necessity, with all their courage and stoic patience, preferring to fast and die, but to die at home. We have seen them struggling for a long time with the weak arm of man, an arm emaciated by hunger, against the brilliant, pitiless fecundity of those terrible *Briureuses* of industry, which, day and night, urged by steam, work with a thousand arms at once ; at every improvement of the machine, its unfortunate rival added to his labour and retrenched from his food. Our colony of weavers in London has thus gradually become extinct. Poor people ! so honest, so resigned, and innocent in their lives, to whom indigence and hunger proved no tempters. In their miserable Spitalfields, they cultivated flowers intelligently ; London took pleasure in visiting them.

I spoke just now of the Flemish weavers of the middle ages, the Lollards and Beghards, as they were then called. The Church, which often persecuted them as heretics, never approached these dreamers but with one thing, *love* ; an exalted and refined love for the invisible lover, God : occasionally, also, vulgar love, under the forms which it assumes in the populous districts of industry ; vulgar, yet mystic, teaching for doctrine a more than fraternal community which was to establish a sensual paradise here on earth.

This tendency to sensuality is the same among those of the present day, who, moreover, have not the poetic reverie to soar above it. An English puritan, who, in our time, has made a delightful picture of the happiness which the manufacturing workman enjoys, confesses that *the flesh grows very warm there and rebels*. That does not proceed alone from the indiscriminate meeting of the sexes, from the temperature, &c. There is a moral cause. It is precisely because the manufactory is a world of iron, wherein man feels everywhere only the hardness and the icy chill of the metal, that he approaches so much the nearer to woman in his moments of liberty. The manufactory is the kingdom of necessity, of fatality. The only living thing there is the severity of the foreman ; there they often punish, but never reward. There man feels himself so little man, that as soon as ever he comes out, he must greedily seek the most intense excitement of the human faculties, that which concentrates the sentiment of boundless liberty in the short moment of a delicious dream. This excitement is intoxication, especially the intoxication of love.

Unfortunately, *ennui* and monotony, from which these captives feel the desire of escaping, render them, in whatever their life contains of freedom, incapable of constancy, fond of change. Love, by ever changing its object, is no longer love : it is only debauchery. The remedy is worse than the disease ; enervated by the thralldom of work, they become still more so by the abuse of liberty.

Physical weakness, moral impotency ! The sentiment of impotency is one of the great miseries of this condition. This man, so weak in the presence of the machine, and who follows it in all its motions, is dependent on the master of the manufactory ; and, still more, on a thousand unknown causes which, one moment or other, may cause a scarcity of work and deprive him of his bread. The ancient weavers, who, however, were not like these, the serfs of machinery, humbly avowed this impotency, and taught it ; it was their theology : “ God can do all, man nothing.” The true name of this class is the first that Italy gave them in the middle ages, *Humiliati*.\*

Our men are not so easily resigned. Sprung from military races, they are incessantly struggling to rise again ; they would like to remain men. They seek, as far as they can, a false energy in wine. Does it require much to be intoxicated ? Take a view of the *cabaret* itself (if you can get over this disgust) ; you will see that a man in an ordinary state, if he drink unadulterated wine, would drink much more without any inconvenience. But for him who drinks not wine every day, who comes there enervated, fainting from the atmosphere of the workshop, who, under the name of wine, drinks only a vile alcoholic mixture, intoxication is inevitable.

Extreme physical dependency, the claims of instinctive life, which once more revert to dependency, moral impotency, and the void of the mind, these are the causes of their vices. Do not, as they do at present, seek it so much in outward causes, for instance, in the inconvenience resulting from the meeting together of a crowd in the same place, as if human nature was so bad that to become entirely corrupt, it is sufficient to meet together. Behold our philanthropists, with this fine idea, working to *isolate* men and wall them up, if they can ; they think they can preserve or cure man only by building him sepulchres.

That crowd is not bad in itself. Its disorders spring, in a great measure, from its condition, its subjection to the mechanical order,

\* I have several times, both in my lectures and my books (especially in Vol. V. of the “ Histoire de France ”), sketched out the history of industry. In order to understand it, however, it would be necessary to go farther back, and not consider it first of all in those great and powerful corporations which sway the city itself. We must first of all take the workman, in his humble origin, despised as he was in the beginning ; when the primitive inhabitant of the town, the proprietor of the suburb, or even the tradesman, who had there his hall, bell, and justice, were unanimous in despising the workman, the *blue-nail*, as they called him ; when the burgess hardly received him, outside the town, in the shadow of the walls, between two enclosures (pfaßburg) ; when it was forbidden to do him justice if he could not pay taxes ; when they fixed for him, in a whimsical arbitrary manner, the price at which he might sell, at so much to the rich, so much to the poor, &c.



which, for living bodies, is itself a disorder, — a death, and which thereby provokes, in the few moments of liberty, a violent return towards life. If any thing resembles fatality, it is certainly this. How heavily, how almost invincibly, does this fatality weigh upon the child and woman ! The latter, less pitied, is, perhaps, even more to be pitied. She is in double bondage : though a slave to work, she earns so little with her hands, that the wretched creature must also earn with her youth. When old, what becomes of her ? Nature has laid a law upon woman, that life should be an impossibility for her, unless she lean for support on man.

During the violence of the great contest between England and France, when the English manufacturers went and told Mr. Pitt, that the high wages of the workmen incapacitated them from paying the tax, he uttered a fearful sentence, — “ Take the children ! ” That saying weighs heavily, like a curse, upon England. Since that time, the race has dwindled ; that people, formerly athletic, is enervated and enfeebled. What has become of that rosy hue and bloom which was so admirable in the English youth ? Withered and wasted. They believed Mr. Pitt, and *took the children*.

Let us profit by this lesson. The future is at stake ; the law ought here to be more provident than the father ; the child ought to find, in default of his mother, a mother in his native country. She will open the school for him as an asylum, a port, a protection against the workshop.

The mental void, as we have said, the absence of every intellectual interest, is one of the principal causes of the debasement of the manufactory workman. His is a work which requires neither strength nor skill, and never solicits thought ! Nothing, nothing, and for ever nothing ! No moral force could withstand that ! The school ought to give to the young mind which such an occupation will not elevate, some lofty, generous idea, that may return in those long blank days, and solace it in the wearisomeness of mortal hours.

In the present state of things, the schools, organised for *ennui*, do but add disgust to fatigue. The evening ones are, for the most part, a farce. Imagine these poor little children, who left home before daylight, and are now returning, tired and wet, a league or two from Mulhausen ; who, lantern in hand, are slipping and stumbling at night along the muddy lanes of Déville ; — call on them now to begin their studies, and go to school !

Whatever be the miseries of the peasant, there is, in comparing them with those now under consideration, a terrible difference, which influences not accidentally the individual, but profoundly, generally, the very race. It may be said in one word, — in the country the child is happy.

Almost naked, barefoot, with a morsel of brown bread, he tends geese or a cow, lives in the air, and plays. The agricultural labours, in which they gradually employ him, do but strengthen him. The precious years during which man is forming his body and his strength for ever, are thus passed by him in much liberty, and the comforts of home. Now go, you are strong; whatever you do or suffer, you can cope with life.

At a later period the peasant will be miserable: dependent, perhaps; but he has, first of all, gained some dozen or fifteen years of liberty. That alone gives him an immense difference in the scale of happiness.

The manufactory workman carries all his life a very heavy burden, — the weight of his childhood which weakened him early, and, very often, corrupted him. He is inferior to the peasant in physical strength; inferior, also, in the regularity of his morals. But, for all that, he has something which redeems him; he is more sociable and more gentle. The most miserable among them, in their extremest necessities, have abstained from every act of violence; starving, they still waited, and were resigned.

The author of the best inquiry of the day\*, a firm and cool observer, who will not be suspected of any enthusiasm, adduces, in favour of this class of men, this important testimony: — “I have found among our workmen but one virtue that they possess in a higher degree than the more happy classes; — this is a *natural disposition to aid, to succour others in every kind of necessity.*”

I know not whether this is the only superiority they possess, but how great is it! That they should be the least fortunate, and yet the most charitable! That they should preserve themselves from that hard-heartedness so natural to misery! That, in this outward bondage, they still preserve a heart free from hatred! — *that they love more!* Ah! that is a noble triumph, and one which, doubtless, places the man whom we suppose degraded, very high in the estimation of God!

\* Villermé, “Tableau de l’E’tat physique et moral des Ouvriers des Manufactures de Coton,” &c., 1840. We have seen these workmen, in November, 1839, when work was scarce, and the manufacturer obliged to keep only the oldest hands, demand that the work and the wages should be shared, that nobody might be sent away, vol. ii. p. 71. ; see also i. 89. 366. 369. ; and ii. 59. 113. Many of them, who are reproached with concubinage, would marry, if they had the necessary money and papers, i. 54. and ii. 283. (Frégier, ii. 160.). To the assertion of those who pretend that manufactory workmen would gain enough if they made a proper use of their wages, let us oppose the judicious observation of M. Villermé (ii. 14.). For them to earn enough, four things, according to him, are necessary: “That they always be well; always employed; that each family have but two children at most; and lastly, that they be free from every vice.” Those are four conditions seldom found.

## CHAPTER III.

## BONDAGE OF THE ARTISAN.

THE child who leaves the manufactory and the service of machinery to be apprenticed to a master, certainly rises in the industrial scale; more is required of his hands and of his mind. His life will no longer be the accessory of a lifeless movement; he will act himself, and be truly a workman. A progress in intelligence — a progress in suffering! The machine was regulated, and man is not.\* It was impassible, without caprice, anger, or brutality. It moreover left the child free, at stated hours; at night, at least, he might repose. But here, the apprentice of the small manufacturer belongs to his master day and night: his labour is limited only by the exigence of more or less pressing orders; he has the work, and, moreover, all the miseries of the servant; besides the master's caprices, all those of the family. Whatever annoys or irritates the husband or the wife, falls, very often, upon his shoulders. A bankruptcy happens, the apprentice is beaten; the master comes home drunk, the apprentice is beaten; the work is slack or pressing, he is beaten all the same.

It is the ancient law of industry, which was nothing but bondage. In the contract of apprenticeship, the master becomes a father, but only to apply the words of Solomon, "Spare not the rod." As early as the thirteenth century, we see public authority interfering to moderate this paternity.

And it was not alone from the master towards the apprentice that there was rigour and violence; in trades in which the hierarchy was involved, blows fell, ever multiplying from one degree to another. Certain nomenclatures of *compagnonage* still testify to this rigour. The *compagnon*, or foreman, is the *wolf*; tormented by the *ape*, that is, the master, he hunts the *fox*, the aspirant, who pays it with interest to the *rabbit*, or poor apprentice.

To be ill-treated and beaten for ten years, the apprentice was obliged to pay; and he paid at every step they permitted him to

\* M. Léon Faucher has admirably distinguished this difference in his "Mémoire sur le Travail des Enfants à Paris." (Revue des Deux-Mondes, Nov. 15, 1844). See also his "Apprentissage dans l'Industrie parcellaire," vol. ii. in his "Études sur l'Angleterre." This excellent economist, who has proved himself a very great writer, reveals to us there, beyond the hell of manufactories, another hell which was not suspected.

take in this initiation. At length, when he had worn out the rope as apprentice, the stick as valet, he underwent the sentence of a corporation, interested in not augmenting their number, and might be sent back, rejected, without appeal.

Now, the gates are open : apprenticeship is less long, if not less hard. Apprentices are received but too easily ; the miserable little gain derived from them (which the master, the father, or the body of the trade profits by) is a continual temptation to make new ones, and multiply workmen beyond what is wanted.

The artisan of former times admitted with difficulty, more rare, and thereby enjoying a sort of monopoly, suffered none of the cares of our workman. He gained much less \*, but he was seldom without work. He was a gay active companion, who travelled much. Wherever he found work, he remained. His master most generally lodged him, and occasionally fed him with wholesome, light food ; in the evening, when he had eaten his dry bread, he went up to his garret under the tiles, and slept contented.

How many changes have taken place in his condition, but for the worse ! A material amelioration, but an inconstant uneasy condition, the sombre security of fate ! A thousand new elements of moral sufferings !

Let us sum up these changes in one word : *He has become a man.*

\* We have already spoken of the wages of manufactory workmen. If we would study wages in general, we shall find that this much-debated question comes to this : *Wages have risen*, say some ; and they are right, because they reckon from 1789, or even further back. *Wages have not risen*, say others ; and they are also right, because they reckon from 1824. Since that period, manufactory workmen gain less, and the others have but an illusory increase ; the value of money having changed, he who earns what he then did, receives in reality one-third less. He who earned, and still earns three francs, receives hardly more than the value of two francs. Add that necessities having grown more numerous, together with ideas, he suffers in not having a thousand things that were then indifferent to him. Wages are very high in France, in comparison with Switzerland and Germany ; but in the former wants are much more keenly felt. The mean rate of Paris wages, stated by M. L. Faucher and L. Blanc alike, at three francs fifty centimes (2s. 11d.), is sufficient for a single man, but very insufficient for the father of a family. I give here the average of wages which several authors have endeavoured to fix for France, since Louis XIV. ; but I know not whether it be possible to establish an average for such diversified elements :—

1698 (Vauban)	. .	12 sous
1738 (Saint-Pierre)	. .	16 „
1788 (Arthur Young)	. .	19 „
1819 (Chaptal)	. .	25 „
1832 (Morogne)	. .	30 „
1840 (Villermé)	. .	40 „

This is for labour in towns. Wages have increased very little in the country

To be a man in the true sense, is first, and especially, to have a wife. The workman, generally single in former times, is often a married man at the present day. Married or not, he generally finds, on his return, a female in his house ; a home, a fire-side, a wife — Oh ! life has been transformed !

A wife, a family — children presently ! Expense, misery ! If work failed ? —

It is very affecting to see all these hard-working men in the evening, striding homewards at a rapid pace. See this man, after his long day's labour, often at a league from home, after a miserable breakfast and a solitary dinner, who has been standing for fifteen hours, — see how active he is at night ! He is hastening to his nest. To be a man one hour a day, in fact, is not too much.

A sacred sight ! He is carrying bread home, and, when once arrived, he rests himself ; he is no longer any thing, but gives himself up, like a child, to his wife. Nourished by him, she nourishes and warms him ; they both serve the child, who does nothing, but is free, and is their master. That the last should be master, — such is, indeed, the city of God !

The rich man never tastes this delightful enjoyment, this supreme blessing of man, to feed his family every day with the essence of his life — his work. The poor man alone is a father ; every day he creates anew, and re-produces his family.

This grand mystery is better felt by woman than by the sages of the world. She is happy in owing every thing to man. That alone imparts a singular charm to the poor household. There, nothing is foreign or indifferent ; every thing bears the stamp of a beloved hand, the seal of the heart. Man very often little knows the privations she endures in order that, on his return, he may find his dwelling modest, yet adorned. Great is the ambition of woman for the household, clothes, and linen. This last article is new ; the *linen closet*, the pride of the countrywoman, was unknown to the wife of the town workman, before the revolution in industry which I have mentioned. Cleanliness, purity, modesty, those graces of woman, then enchanted the house ; the bed was surrounded with curtains ; the child's cradle, dazzling with whiteness, became a paradise : — the whole cut out, and sewed in a few evenings. Add, moreover, a flower at the window ! What a surprise ! the husband, on his return, no longer knows his own home !

This taste for flowers, which has spread (there are now several markets for them here), and this little expenditure to ornament the interior, are they not lamentable, when these people never know whether they have any work on the morrow ? — Call it not *expenditure*, say rather *economy*. It is a very great one, if the innocent

attraction of the wife renders this house charming to the husband, and can keep him there. Let us ornament, I beseech you, both the house and the wife ! A few ells of printed cotton make her another woman ; see, she is regenerated, and become young again.

“ Remain here, I entreat you.” This is on Saturday evening ; she casts her arms round his neck, and saves her children’s bread that he was about to squander away.\*

The Sunday comes, and the wife has conquered. The husband, shaved and changed, allows her to clothe him in a good warm garment. That is soon done. But that which is a long, serious business, is the child, such as they would like to dress him out on that day. They then set out, the child walks on before, under his mother’s eye ; let him take especial care not to spoil her capital work.

Look well at these people, and be well assured that how high soever you go, you will never find any thing morally superior. This woman is virtue, with a particular charm of unaffected reason and address to govern strength, without being aware of it. That man is the strong, the patient, the courageous, who bears for society the heaviest load of human life. A true *companion of duty* (a noble title of *compagnonage* !) He has stood strong and firm, like a soldier at his post. The more dangerous his trade, the more sure is his morality. A celebrated architect, sprung from the people, and who knew them well, said one day to a friend of mine, “ The most honest men I have known were of this class. They know, at their departure in the morning, they may possibly not return in the evening, and they are always ready to appear before God.†

Still, such a profession, however noble it may be, is not that which a mother desires for her son. Hers promises much ; he will go far. The *Frères* ‡ speak highly of him, and caress him much. His drawings, holiday compliments, and writing-specimens, already ornament the room, between Napoleon and the Sacred Heart. He will be certainly sent to the free school for drawing. The father asks why ? Drawing, replies the mother, will always be serviceable to him in his business. A reply of double meaning, we must confess, under which she conceals a far greater ambition. Why should not this

\* Bread ! and the Landlord ! two ideas of the wife, which never forsake her. What skill, virtue, and strength of mind, it often requires to save up a quarter’s rent ! Who will ever know it ?

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‡ Ecclesiastical teachers in the free schools of the poor. C. C.

To be a man in the true sense, is first, and especially, to have a wife. The workman, generally single in former times, is often a married man at the present day. Married or not, he generally finds, on his return, a female in his house ; a home, a fire-side, a wife — Oh ! life has been transformed !

A wife, a family — children presently ! Expense, misery ! If work failed ? —

It is very affecting to see all these hard-working men in the evening, striding homewards at a rapid pace. See this man, after his long day's labour, often at a league from home, after a miserable breakfast and a solitary dinner, who has been standing for fifteen hours, — see how active he is at night ! He is hastening to his nest. To be a man one hour a day, in fact, is not too much.

A sacred sight ! He is carrying bread home, and, when once arrived, he rests himself ; he is no longer any thing, but gives himself up, like a child, to his wife. Nourished by him, she nourishes and warms him ; they both serve the child, who does nothing, but is free, and is their master. That the last should be master, — such is, indeed, the city of God !

The rich man never tastes this delightful enjoyment, this supreme blessing of man, to feed his family every day with the essence of his life — his work. The poor man alone is a father ; every day he creates anew, and re-produces his family.

This grand mystery is better felt by woman than by the sages of the world. She is happy in owing every thing to man. That alone imparts a singular charm to the poor household. There, nothing is foreign or indifferent ; every thing bears the stamp of a beloved hand, the seal of the heart. Man very often little knows the privations she endures in order that, on his return, he may find his dwelling modest, yet adorned. Great is the ambition of woman for the household, clothes, and linen. This last article is new ; the *linen closet*, the pride of the countrywoman, was unknown to the wife of the town workman, before the revolution in industry which I have mentioned. Cleanliness, purity, modesty, those graces of woman, then enchanted the house ; the bed was surrounded with curtains ; the child's cradle, dazzling with whiteness, became a paradise : — the whole cut out, and sewed in a few evenings. Add, moreover, a flower at the window ! What a surprise ! the husband, on his return, no longer knows his own home !

This taste for flowers, which has spread (there are now several markets for them here), and this little expenditure to ornament the interior, are they not lamentable, when these people never know whether they have any work on the morrow ? — Call it not *expenditure*, say rather *economy*. It is a very great one, if the innocent

attraction of the wife renders this house charming to the husband, and can keep him there. Let us ornament, I beseech you, both the house and the wife ! A few ells of printed cotton make her another woman ; see, she is regenerated, and become young again.

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child, so well born and gifted, be a painter or a sculptor, as well as any other? She pinches herself for a few sous for *crayons*, and that very expensive paper. Her son will presently show up, and carry off all the prizes; in her fond dreams, already thunders the grand name of *Rome*.

Maternal ambition thus too often succeeds in making a poor miserable artist of one who would have better gained his livelihood as a workman. The arts are scarcely productive, even in time of peace, when all the richer classes, especially the women, instead of purchasing the products of art, are artists themselves. Should a war or a revolution break out, art is absolute starvation.

Often also the aspiring young artist, starting full of ardour and inspiration, is stopped short; his father dies, and he must succour his family; so, he turns workman. A great affliction for his mother — much lamentation, which discourages the young man.

All his life he will curse his fate; he will work here, but his soul will be elsewhere. A cruel tormenting position. And yet nothing will dissuade him. Come not near him to give him advice; you would be ill received. It is too late; and he must surmount every obstacle. You will see him for ever reading and meditating; reading during the few moments allotted to meals, and in the evening, nay, throughout the night, absorbed in a book; on Sunday, ever at home and melancholy. One can hardly imagine how great is the thirst for reading in that state of mind. During work, and that the most irreconcilable of all with study, amid the rolling and trembling of twenty machines, I have known an unfortunate spinner put a book in the corner of his loom, and read a line every time the sledge receded and allowed him a second.

How long is the day when it passes thus! How tormenting are the last hours! For him who is waiting for the bell and cursing its slowness, the odious workshop, at the close of day, seems quite fantastic; the demons of impatience are cruelly sporting in those shadows. "O liberty! O light! Will you leave me here for ever?"

I pity his family, on his return, if he has one. A man imbittered in this struggle, and wholly intent on personal progress, considers every thing else of little value. The faculty of loving diminishes in this sombre life. The family is less loved; it annoys him; he weans himself even from his native land, imputing to it the injustice of fate.

The father of the studious workman, though more clownish, heavy, and inferior in so many respects, had more than one advantage over his son. The national sentiment was more powerful within him; he thought less about mankind, and more about France. The great French family and his own dear little family constituted his world, and he set his heart upon it. But, alas! what has be-

come of that charming home and the delightful household that we used to admire?

Science in itself does not harden and wither the heart. If it has this effect in the present case, it is because it is cruelly cramped when it reaches the mind. It does not show itself in its natural hues, in its true and perfect light, but obliquely, partially, like those narrow and false rays gleaming in a cellar. It does not make one malevolent and envious by what it imparts, but by what it withholds. He, for instance, who knows not the complicated means by which wealth is created, will naturally believe it is not created; that it does not augment in this world, but is only displaced; that one acquires only by stripping another: every acquisition will seem to him a theft, and he will hate every possessor. Hate? Why? For the possessions of this world? Why, the world itself would be worthless, were it not for love.

Whatever be the inevitable errors of an imperfect study, we must respect that moment. What is more touching, more serious, than to see the man who till now learned at hazard, wanting to study—pursuing science, with an impassioned will, through so many obstacles?

It is *voluntary* culture which places the workman, at the moment under consideration, not only above the peasant, but above the classes that are thought superior, who, in fact, have books, leisure, everything—whom science courts, but who, when once rid of the education imposed upon them, abandon study, and no longer care about truth. I see many a man who, after passing honourably through our higher schools, still young in years, but already old in heart, forgets the science he cultivated, without even having the impetuosity of the passions for an excuse, but feels weary, sleeps, smokes, and dreams.

Obstacles, I know, are great incentives. The workman loves books because he has but few; sometimes he has but one, but if it be good, he will learn so much the better. A single book read through and through, ruminated on and pondered over, is often more fruitful than a vast mass of indigested reading. I lived for whole years on a Virgil, and found myself well off. An odd volume of Racine, purchase by chance at a stall on the quay, created the poet of Toulon.

They who are inwardly rich have always sufficient resources. They extend what they have, fertilise it by thought, and transport it to infinity. Instead of envying this world of clay, they make one for themselves, all of gold and light. They say to this world, "Keep thy poverty that thou callest riches, I am rich within myself."

The greater part of the poetry written by workmen in later times is stamped with a peculiar character of meekness and melancholy,

which often reminds me of their predecessors, the workmen of the middle ages. If some of them are bitter and violent, they are the minority. This lofty inspiration would have transported these true poets still higher, if, in regard to form, they had not followed the aristocratic models with too much deference.

They are scarcely beginning. Why are you in a hurry to say they will never reach the highest ranks? You start from the false notion that time and culture do every thing; you reckon as nothing the inward development which the soul acquires by its own strength, even amid manual labour — a spontaneous vegetation which thrives by obstacles. Book-men! know that this man, without books, and of little culture, has, in compensation, a substitute for them, — he is master of sorrows.

Whether he succeed or not, I see no remedy. He will pursue his road, the path of meditation and suffering. "He sought the light (says my Virgil), caught a glimpse of it, and groaned!" And, ever groaning for it, he will seek it for ever. Who that has once had a glimpse of it, could ever renounce it?

"Light! more light!" Such were the last words of Goethe. This prayer of expiring genius is the general cry of nature, and it resounds from world to world. What that mighty man, one of the eldest born of God, then said, his most humble children, the least advanced in animal life, the Mollusca, say also in the depths of the sea; they will not live in any place where light does not reach them. The flower wants light, turns towards it, and decays without it. The companions of our toil, even animals, rejoice like ourselves, or grieve, according as it comes or goes. My grandson, two months old, weeps when day declines.

This summer, whilst walking in my garden, I heard a bird on a branch, singing to the setting sun; he was perched facing the light, and was visibly delighted. And so was I to see him; our sad domestic birds had never given me the idea of this intelligent, powerful creature, so small, yet so impassioned. I thrilled with joy at his song. He cast back his head and his dilated breast; and never was a singer, never was a poet in such natural ecstasy. Yet it was not love (the season had passed); it was evidently the charm of day, the loveliness of sunset, that filled him with joy.

Barbarous the science and cruel the pride that so degrades animated nature, and separates man so widely from his inferior brethren!

I said to him through my tears, "Poor child of light, who reflect it in your song, you do well indeed to sing it! Night, full of ambush and perils for you, is near akin to death. Who knows whether you will ever see day again?" Then, passing mentally from his destiny, to that of all the beings which, from the depths of creation, are so slowly ascending towards day, I said with Goethe and the little bird, "Light! O Lord! more light!"

## CHAPTER IV.

## BONDAGE OF THE MANUFACTURER.

I READ in the little book of the Rouen weaver, already quoted, "Our manufacturers are *all workmen* by origin ;" and again : "Our manufacturers of the day (1836) are the laborious and economical working men of the early times of the Restoration." This, I believe, is pretty general, and not peculiar to the manufactories of Rouen.

Several building contractors have told me that they had *all been workmen*, and had come to Paris as masons, carpenters, &c.

If working men have been able to rise to the very vast and complicated business of great manufactories, it will easily be believed that, with greater reason, they have become masters in those branches of industry which require much less capital, such as petty manufactures, trades, and retail businesses. Licensed tradesmen, who had scarcely increased during the Empire, have multiplied two-fold during the thirty years that have passed since 1815. About six hundred thousand men have become manufacturers or tradesmen. Now, as in our country, whoever can just manage to live, keeps to his business, and does not embark in speculation, we may say with confidence, that half a million of working men have become masters, and obtained what they believed to be independence.

This progress was very rapid in the first ten years, from 1815 to 1825. Those brave men, who, returning from war, wheeled suddenly to the right about towards industry, charged, as for an onset, and, without difficulty, carried every position. So great was their confidence, that they imparted some of it even to the capitalists. Men of such spirit would carry with them even the most lukewarm ; people believed, without any difficulty, that they were about to recommence in industry the whole series of our victories, and give us, in this field, satisfaction for our late reverses.

It is beyond a doubt that these *parvenu* workmen, who founded our manufactures, had excellent qualities : spirit, boldness, intrepidity in speculation, and often a sure eye for business. Many of them have made their fortunes : may their sons not ruin themselves !

With such qualities, our manufacturers of 1815 felt but too well the demoralisation of that sad period. Political death is not far from moral death ; and so they could see then. They preserved,

generally, not the sentiment of honour, but the violence of military life ; cared neither for men, things, nor the future, and treated unmercifully two classes of individuals, — the workman and the consumer.

Workmen, however, being still scarce at that period, even in machinery manufactories, which require so little apprenticeship, they were obliged to give high wages. They thus *pressed* men in town and country, placed these conscripts of labour at the pace of the machine, and required that they should be, like it, indefatigable. They seemed to apply to industry the great imperial principle : sacrifice men to abridge warfare. Our national impatience, which often renders us barbarous towards animals, acquired the force of law against men of military traditions ; work was to go on at a *quick march*, at a gallop : so much the worse for those who perished !

As to commerce, the manufacturers of that time traded as if they were in a hostile country ; they treated the purchaser just as the female shopkeepers ransomed the Cossaks in 1815. They sold at false weight, false die, and false measure ; they thus played their cards very quickly, and retired ; having shut France out from her best markets, compromised for a lengthened period her commercial reputation, and, what is more serious, done the English the essential service, not to mention other points, to estrange from us a whole world, Spanish America, the imitator of our Revolution.

Their successors, who are either their sons or their principal workmen, now find it a difficult matter to get on, with this reputation in every market. They are astonished and tormented to find their profits so much reduced. Most of them would be heartily glad to retire, if they could ; but they are engaged, they must go on — *march ! march !*

Elsewhere industry is based upon large capitals, upon a mass of customs, traditions, and sure relations ; it has a vast regular trade for its foundation. But here (in France), to say the truth, it is but a fight. A persevering workman, who inspires confidence, becomes a sleeping partner ; or else a young man is willing to hazard his father's earnings ; he starts with a small capital, a dowry, or a loan. God grant that he may escape between two critical periods ; for we have a crisis every six years (1818, 1825, 1830, 1836). It is always the same story ; a year or two after the crisis come a few orders, oblivion, and hope ; the manufacturer thinks he is launched ; he urges, presses, and strains men and things, workmen, and machines ; the commercial Bonaparte of 1820 reappears for a moment ; then, encumbered and glutted, they are obliged to sell their goods at a loss : add, that these expensive machines are, about every five years, past service, or outdone by some new invention ; if any profit remain, it goes to alter the machinery.

The capitalist, warned by so many lessons, now believes that France is rather an industrious than a commercial nation, more fitted to manufacture than to sell. He lends to the new manufacturer, like a man departing on a dangerous voyage. What security has he? The most splendid manufactories are sold only at a great loss; these brilliant buildings are, in a few years, worth only the iron and copper. It is not upon the factory that they lend, but upon the man; the manufacturer has the sad advantage of being able to be imprisoned, and that gives a value to his signature. He knows right well he has embarked his person, occasionally much more than his person, the lives of his wife and children, the property of his father-in-law, or that of some too credulous friend, perhaps even a sacred deposit, in the frenzy of this terrible existence. So, there is no mincing the matter, he must conquer or die; make a fortune, or jump into the river.

A man in this state of mind is not very tender-hearted. It would be a miracle if he were gentle and kind to his people, his workmen. See him as he strides along his vast workshops, with a sullen unfeeling air. When he is at one end, the workmen, at the other, say in a whisper, "How furious he is to-day! how he has treated the foreman!" He treats them as he has just been treated himself. He has just returned from the money-market — say, from Basle to Mulhausen, or from Rouen to Deville. He bawls, and they are astonished; they little know that the Jew has just taken from his body a pound of flesh!

From whom will he try to get it back? From the consumer? The latter is on his guard. The manufacturer falls back upon the workman. Wherever there is no apprenticeship, wherever apprentices are imprudently multiplied, they present themselves in crowds, and offer themselves at a low price, and the manufacturer profits by the fall of wages.\* Then the glut in the market obliging him to sell even at a loss — the lowness of wages, which is death for the workman, is no longer profitable to the manufacturer; and the consumer alone gains by it.

The most hard-hearted manufacturer, however, was born man;

\* I was unwilling to believe what I was told of the infamous frauds practised by certain manufacturers, upon the consumer as to quality, and upon the workman as to quantity of work. I have been obliged to yield. The same things have been authenticated by friends of the manufacturers who have spoken of them to me with grief and humiliation, and by persons of note, both merchants and bankers. The *prud'hommes* have no authority to repress these crimes; the sufferer moreover dares not complain. Such an inquiry concerns the attorney-general.

originally he felt something like interest for the crowd.\* Gradually the pre-occupation of business, the uncertainty of his position, his risks, and mental sufferings, have made him very indifferent to the material sufferings of the workmen. He does not know them so well as his father did, who had been a workman himself.† Being changed incessantly, they seem to him ciphers, or machines, only less docile and less regular, which the progress of industry will allow him to dispense with; they are the flaw of the system in this iron world; where movements are so precise, the only thing faulty is man.

It is curious to observe, that the only persons (few indeed in number) who show any regard for the workman's lot, are occasionally the very small manufacturers, who live with him on a patriarchal footing; or, on the contrary, the very large and powerful establishments, which, founded upon solid fortunes, are sheltered from the ordinary disquietudes of trade. All the intermediate space is a pitiless battle-field.

We know that our manufacturers at Mulhausen have demanded, in opposition to their own interest, a law to regulate the labour of children. In 1836, when an experiment was made by one of them

\* This gradual hardening of the heart, the gradual cunning efforts to stifle the voice of humanity within them, is very acutely analysed by M. Emmery, in his pamphlet on the *Amélioration du Sort des Ouvriers dans les Travaux Publics* (1837). He treats especially of the workmen injured in the dangerous tasks which the contractors undertake for Government. "A contractor, whose heart is in the right place, may once, or perhaps several times at first, relieve his unfortunate workmen when injured; but when this happens often, when the demands for relief are multiplied, they become too burdensome; the contractor then makes a bargain with himself, wards off his first impulse of generosity, insensibly reduces the circle of applicants, and diminishes, in a more marked way, the amount of every charitable donation. He finds out that in his most dangerous workshops, he, the contractor, receives no over-price on this account; on the contrary, that he is obliged to pay his workmen higher wages. Now, these higher wages soon seem to him the price of the accidents to be feared. Additional charity appears to him above his means. The injured workman, moreover, has not been long enough in his employment; the sufferer is not one of the most skilful, or most useful, &c.; that is to say, that the heart so hardens by habit, and often by necessity, that all charity is soon extinct; that the little relief granted is no longer shared among all according to strict justice; and that the only result of all the generous emotions which ought to be occasioned by such distressing sights, is reduced to a few donations, granted at pleasure, and calculated, not according to the real wants of starving families, but to the future interest of the work-yard (*chantier*), or of the contractor's undertakings.

† The difference between the father and the son is, that the latter, never having been a workman, knowing less about manufactures, and less acquainted with the limits of possibility and impossibility, is sometimes a harder task-master through ignorance.

to give the workmen salubrious lodgings with little gardens, these same manufacturers of Alsatia were touched with this happy idea, and under that generous impulse, subscribed two millions. What became of that subscription? I have not been able to discover.

The manufacturers would, most assuredly, be more humane, if their family, often very charitable, were less strangers to the manufactory.\* They generally live apart, and see the workmen only from afar. They willingly exaggerate their vices, judging of them almost always from the moment of which I have already spoken, when liberty, long restrained, at length escapes with noise and disorder, — I mean the moment of leaving work. It often happens, too, that the manufacturer and his family hate the workman, because they think they are hated by him; and I will say, contrary to common opinion, that in this they are frequently mistaken. In the great manufactories, the workman hates the foreman, feeling as he does his immediate tyranny; but that of the master, being more remote, is less odious to him; if he has not been taught to hate it, he looks upon it as a fatality, and is not irritated against it.

The problem of industry becomes very complicated for France by her external situation. Blockaded, in a manner, by the unanimous ill-will of Europe, she has lost, with her old alliances, every hope of opening new outlets in the east or west. Industrialism, which founded the present system on the strange supposition that the English, our rivals, would be our friends, finds itself, with this friendship, blockaded and immured as in a tomb.

Assuredly our great, agricultural, and warlike France, with her twenty-five millions of men — who has been good enough to believe the manufacturers — who, upon their word, has kept motionless — who, out of kindness for them, did not retake the Rhine — has a right

\* I shall never forget a little touching, graceful, charming scene which I once witnessed. The master of a factory having had the kindness to conduct me himself over his workshops, his young wife insisted on being of the party. I was surprised, at first, to see her, in her white dress, attempt this journey through mud and dirt (every thing is not fine, nor clean, in the manufacture of the most brilliant objects), but I understood better afterwards why she encountered this purgatory. Where her husband showed me things, she saw men, souls, often sorely wounded. Without her explaining any thing, I comprehended how, gliding through that throng, she had a delicate, penetrating, sentiment of all the not hateful, but anxious, and perhaps envious thoughts that were fermenting among them. On her way she let fall words, both just and refined, sometimes almost tender; to a young suffering maiden, for instance, the young lady, herself a sufferer, did this with a good grace. Several were affected by it; an old workman, who thought she was fatigued, offered her a chair with charming eagerness. The young ones were more moody; she, who saw every thing, with a few words dispelled their sorrow.



now to deplore their credulity. More shrewd than they, she ever believed that the English would remain English.

Let us, however, make a distinction between the manufacturers. There are some who, instead of falling asleep behind the triple line of custom-houses, have nobly prosecuted the war against England. We thank them for their heroic efforts to raise the stone under which she expected to crush us. Their industry struggling against her, under every disadvantage (often at one-third more of expense !), has nevertheless defeated her on several points, even those which required the most brilliant faculties, the most exhaustless richness of invention. She has conquered by art.

It would require a separate treatise to make known the gigantic efforts of Alsatia, which, void of mercantile genius, and without higgling about the expense, has applied every means, invoked every science, and determined to attain the beautiful, cost what it would. Lyons has solved the problem of a continual metamorphosis, more and more ingenious and brilliant. What shall we say of that Parisian fairy, that responds every moment to the most unexpected suggestions of fancy?

Unexpected, surprising result ! France sells ! France, that excluded, condemned, and excommunicated. They come in spite of themselves, and in spite of themselves are obliged to buy.

They buy — patterns, which they go and copy, ill or well, at home. Many an Englishman has declared, in an inquiry, that he has a house in Paris to *have patterns*. A few pieces purchased at Paris, Lyons, or in Alsatia, and afterwards copied abroad, are sufficient for the English or German counterfeiter to inundate the world. It is like the book trade ; France writes and Belgium sells. These products in which we excel are unfortunately those which change the most, and are always requiring new preparations. Though it be the province of art to add infinitely to the value of the raw material, so expensive an art as this scarcely allows any benefit. England, on the contrary, possessing markets among the inferior nations of the five divisions of the world, manufactures on a grand scale, in a uniform way, long pursued without any new preparation or alteration : and such products, whether common or not, are always lucrative.

Work, then, O France, to remain poor : work and suffer, without ever tiring. The motto of the grand manufactures which constitute thy glory, which impose thy taste, thy scientific mind, upon the world, is this : Invent, or perish.

## CHAPTER V.

## BONDAGE OF THE TRADESMAN.\*

THE man of work, whether artisan or manufacturer, generally looks upon the tradesman as a man of leisure. Sitting in his shop, what has he to do in the morning but to read the newspaper, then chat all day, and lock up his till in the evening? The artisan flatters himself that if he can save a trifle he will turn tradesman.

The tradesman is the tyrant of the manufacturer. He pays him back all the annoyance and vexations of the purchaser. Now, the purchaser, in the present state of society, is a man who wants to buy for nothing; a poor man, who would ape the rich, or a man whose wealth is of yesterday, and who is very loth to take out of his pocket the cash that has been just put in.† He requires two things, — a showy article, and the lowest price; the quality of the material is of secondary consideration. Who will give the value of a good watch? Nobody. Even the rich want nothing but a good watch cheap.

The tradesman must either deceive those people or perish. All his life is composed of two warfares: one of cheating and cunning against this unreasonable purchaser, and the other of vexations and unreasonableness against the manufacturer. Fickle, uneasy, and finical, he pays him back, day by day, the most absurd caprices of his master, the public; drags him right and left, changes his tack every moment, prevents him from following up any idea, and renders great invention, in several branches, almost impossible.

The chief point for the tradesman is, that the manufacturer should aid him in deceiving the purchaser, enter into his petty frauds, and not flinch before great ones. I have heard manufacturers bewail over what was required of them against their honour; they were obliged either to lose their trade or become accomplices in the most flagrant impositions. It is no longer enough to adulterate qualities, they must sometimes become forgers, and assume the marks of manufactures in vogue.

The repugnance for industry exhibited by the noble republics of antiquity, and the haughty barons in the middle ages, is doubtless

\* We speak here of individual trading, as is generally the case in France, not of partnership concerns, which exist, as yet, only in a few large towns.

† New classes of men now springing up, as M. Leclaire very well explains (*Peinture en bâtiment*). They know nothing of the real value of articles. They want what is showy — washy! No matter.

unreasonable, if by industry we understand those complicated fabrics which require science and art, or a grand wholesale trade, which requires such a variety of knowledge, information, and combination. But this repugnance is truly reasonable when it relates to the ordinary usages of commerce, the miserable necessity in which the tradesman finds himself of lying, cheating, and adulterating.

I do not hesitate to affirm that for a man of honour the position of the most dependent working man is free in comparison with this. A serf in body, he is free in soul. To enslave his soul, on the contrary, and his tongue, to be obliged from morning to night to disguise his thoughts, this is the lowest state of slavery. Picture to yourself this man who has been a soldier, who has preserved in every thing else the sentiment of honour, and who is resigned to that. He must suffer much.

It is singular that it is precisely for honour that he lies every day, viz. to *honour* his affairs. Dishonour for him is not falsehood, but bankruptcy. Rather than *fail*, commercial honour will urge him on to the point at which fraud is equivalent to robbery, adulteration to poisoning;—a gentle poisoning, I know, with small doses, which kill only in the long run. Even though they pretend that they mix only innocuous and inert materials with their commodities\*, the working man who thinks he shall derive from them the restoration of his strength, but finds nothing at all, can no longer repair his substance; he declines, is exhausted, and lives (so to speak) upon the principal, the funds of his life, which will dwindle away by degrees.

What I find culpable in this adulterator, this vendor of intoxication, is not only his poisoning the people, but his debasing them. Man, fatigued with work, enters that shop in all confidence; he loves it as his house of liberty. Well, what does he find there? Shame! The spirituous mixture sold to him under the name of wine, has, as soon as drunk, an effect that a double or triple quantity of wine would not produce; it masters the brain, troubles the mind, the tongue, and the motions of the body. Drunk and penniless, he is cast by the tradesman into the street. Who is not pierced to the heart in seeing, sometimes in winter, a poor old woman, who has partaken of this poison to warm herself, thrust out in this state, to be a butt for the barbarity of children? The rich man passes by, and says,—“Behold the people!”

\* It has been *legally* ascertained that many of these substances were any thing but innocuous. See the “*Journal de Chimie Médicale*,” the “*Annales d’Hygiène*, and Messrs. Garnier and Harel on “*Falsifications des Substances Alimentaires*,” 1844.

Every man who may have or can borrow 1000 francs (40*l.*), boldly begins trade. From artisan he turns tradesman, that is to say, a man of leisure. He used to live in the *cabaret*, or drinking-shop ; so he opens a *cabaret*. He sets up not far from the old-established shops ; on the contrary, as near as possible, to filch their custom from them ; he comforts himself with the pleasant idea that he will swamp his neighbour. In fact, he gets customers immediately, — all those who owe the other, and will not pay. At the end of a few months, this new shop becomes old ; for others have set up around it. He declines and perishes ; he has lost money, but more still, what was worth more, his working habits. A joyful day that for the survivors, who gradually, however, end in the same way. Others come, but he never appears. Sad and miserable trade, void of industry, and every other idea but that of preying one upon another.

Scarcely does the custom improve, when tradesmen increase, multiply visibly, together with opposition, envy, and hatred. They do nothing, but stand at their doors, with their arms folded, eyeing one another askance, to see if the faithless customer will not enter another shop by mistake. Those of Paris, eighty thousand in number, had last year forty-six thousand trials before the Tribunal of Commerce alone, without speaking of the other tribunals. An awful number ! How many quarrels and enmities does it imply ?

The especial object of this hatred, he whom the licensed trader pursues, and gets arrested when he can, is the poor devil who rolls his shop along, and stops for a moment ; it is the unfortunate woman who carries hers in a basket ! Alas, and often a child also ! \* Let her not think of sitting down, let her be always moving on — otherwise she is seized !

I really do not know whether that wretched shopman, who has had her arrested, is more happy for being seated ; never stirring, ever waiting, and able to foresee nothing. The tradesman scarcely ever knows whence his profit will arise. Receiving his goods at a second or third hand, he has no idea of the state of his own trade in Europe, and cannot guess whether next year he will make a fortune or become a bankrupt.

The manufacturer, even the artisan, have two things, which, in spite of work, render their lot better than that of the tradesman : —

First. — *The tradesman does not create* : he has not the important happiness — worthy of a man — to produce something — to see his work growing under his hand, assuming a form, becoming harmonious, responding to its framer by its progress, and thus consoling his *ennui* and his trouble.

\* See the touching piece of Savinien Lapointe.

Secondly. — Another awful disadvantage, in my opinion, is — *the tradesman is obliged to please*. The workman gives his time, the manufacturer his merchandise, for so much money ; that is a simple contract, which is not humiliating. Neither has occasion to flatter. They are not obliged, often with a lacerated heart and tearful eyes, to be amiable and gay on a sudden, like the lady behind the counter. The tradesman, though uneasy and tormented to death about a bill that falls due to-morrow, must smile and give himself up, by a cruel effort, to the prating of some young fashionable lady, who makes him unfold a hundred pieces, chats for two hours, and after all departs without a purchase. He must please, and so must his wife. He has staked in trade, not only his wealth, his person, and his life, but often his family.\*

The man the least susceptible on his own account, will suffer, every hour, in seeing his wife or daughter at the counter. Even a stranger, an indifferent spectator, does not see, without pain, the domestic concerns of a respectable family, beginning trade, violently disturbed, their fire-side turned into the street, their holy of holies displayed in the shop-window ! The young lady listens, with down-cast eyes, to the impertinent language of some indelicate customer. We return a few months after, and find her bold.

The wife, moreover, contributes much more than the daughter to the success of a house of business. She talks gracefully, charmingly. Where is the impropriety, in such a public life, before the eyes of the crowd ? She chats, but she listens — and to everybody rather than her husband. That husband of hers has a moody mind, is any thing but amusing, full of doubts and trifles, wavering in politics, in every thing discontented with the government, and discontented even with the discontented.

That woman perceives more and more plainly that she has there a tiresome task ; twelve hours a day on the same spot, exposed behind a shop window among the goods. She will not remain for ever so motionless, — that statue may become animated.

There is the beginning of the husband's keen sufferings. The most cruel place in the world for a jealous man is a shop. Everybody comes there, and everybody flatters the lady. The wretched man even does not always know on whom to lay the fault. Sometimes he

\* People have spoken of the silk workwoman, and the clerk who made her pay him for conniving at the theft. People have also spoken of the cotton workwoman, in my opinion, erroneously : the manufacturer associates very little with his male and female workpeople. Lastly, they have said that the country usurer often offers terms at an immoral price. Why have they not spoken of the female shopkeeper, so exposed, so obliged to please the purchaser, to talk long with him, and who is generally so disgusted ?

goes mad,—kills himself or her: some take to their bed and die. More wretched still is he who is resigned.

There was a man who died thus a slow death,—not from jealousy, but grief and humiliation, being every day insulted and outraged in the person of his wife: I mean the unfortunate Louvet. After escaping the dangers of the Reign of Terror, and returning to the Convention, without the means of living, he set his wife up as a bookseller in the Palais-Royal, the book trade being, at this period, the only flourishing one. Unfortunately, this ardent Girondin, as opposed to the Royalists as to the Mountain, had a thousand enemies. A party, called *jeunesse dorée*,—they who ran away so famously on the 13 Vendémiaire,—went to parade bravely before Louvet's shop, entered, sneered, and revenged themselves on a woman, answering the furious husband's provocations only by shouts of laughter. He had furnished them with matter himself, by printing, in the account of his flight and misfortunes, a thousand impassioned details, doubtless indiscreet and imprudent, about his dear Lodoïska. One thing ought to have protected her, and made her sacred for men of feeling,—her courage and devotedness; she had saved her husband. Our gallant gentlemen did not feel that; they coolly carried on their cruel jests, and Louvet died in consequence. His wife wanted to die, but her children, who were brought to her, condemned her to live.

## CHAPTER VI.

## BONDAGE OF THE OFFICIAL.

WHEN children grow up, and the family circle begin to inquire "What is to be done with them?" the most lively and least governable seldom fails to say, "I will be independent." He will commence business, and find therein the independence we have just spoken of. The other brother, the quiet, gentle boy, will be a government servant; at all events, there will be an attempt to make him one. To accomplish this, the family will make enormous sacrifices, often beyond their fortune. Great efforts,—and what result? After several years of schooling and ten years of college life, he will be made an *extra* clerk, and at length regularly appointed with a trifling salary. His brother, the tradesman, who during that time has had far different adventures, is heartily jealous of him, and loses few opportunities of making allusion to the unproductive classes, "who fall asleep comfortably at their desk." In the eyes of the man of industry, there is no producer but himself:—the judge, the soldier, the professor, the official, are "unproductive consumers." \* The parents knew well that a career in a public office was not lucrative; but they wanted for their gentle, quiet child, a sure, fixed, and regular livelihood. Such is the ideal of families, after so many revolutions; such, in their opinion, is the lot of the official; all the rest comes and goes, varies, and changes; the official alone escapes from the vicissitudes of this mortal life, and is, as it were, in a better world.

I know not whether the man in office ever had this paradise on earth, this life of immobility and sleep; but in these days I see no man more on the wing. Without speaking of dismissals which are sometimes inflicted, and are ever to be feared, his life is but a series of changes, journeys, sudden transportations (for some electoral mystery or other) from one end of France to the other, inexplicable disgraces, so-called promotions, which, for two hundred francs more, send him from Perpignan to Lille. All the roads are filled with officials, travelling with their furniture; many have discontinued having any. Quartered in an inn, with their trunks all packed,

\* As if justice and civil order, the defence of the country, and instruction, were not also *productions*, and the first of all!

they live there a sad solitary life, for a year, or less, in an unknown town : at length, when they are just beginning to make acquaintances, they are started off to the opposite pole.

Above all, let them not marry ; their position would be still worse. Independently of this roving life, their low salaries are not fit for a household. Those who are obliged to make their position respected, — such as the priest, the judge, the officer, the professor, — will pass their lives, if they have no fortune, in a continual struggle, in miserable efforts to hide their wretchedness, and envelope it in some imaginary dignity.

Have you not met (not once but often), in a diligence, a respectable, serious, or rather sad-looking lady, in humble and somewhat worn apparel, with a child or two, and an abundance of luggage and boxes, — a household on the top of the coach ? On alighting, you see her met by her husband, a brave, worthy officer, no longer young. She follows him thus, with every species of annoyance and *ennui*, from one garrison to another, is confined on the road, nurses at an inn, and then sets out again. Nothing more sad than to see these poor women thus mixed up by affection and duty with the slavery of a military life.

The salaries of functionaries, whether military or civil, have changed very little since the empire.\* The fixed salary, which people consider as their supreme good fortune, is, in this respect, enjoyed by almost all of them. But as money has fallen, the same figure is ever lessening in real value, and ever representing less : we have remarked this in speaking of commercial wages. France can boast of one thing, — which is, that, with the exception of a few high posts too well remunerated, her public functionaries serve the State almost for nothing. Yet for all that, I affirm that in this country, of which so much injurious has been said, there are few, very few, functionaries accessible to a bribe.

I hear an objection : many are corrupted by the hope of promotion, by intrigue, and sinister influence ; I know it — granted. And yet I will, nevertheless, maintain, that, among these very ill-remunerated people, you will not find any who accept money, like those in Russia, Italy, and so many other countries.

Let us consider the highest order. The judge who decides the fate, the fortune of men, who has every day affairs worth several

\* They have improved in almost all the other States of Europe. Here (in France) they have been augmented for a very small number of places, and lowered for others : for instance, for the clerks in *préfectures* and *sous-préfectures*. For the general character and the divisions of this large army of functionaries read M. Vivien's important work, "*Etudes Administratives*, 1845."



millions in his hands, and who for such lofty, assiduous, fatiguing functions, earns less than many a workman — the judge receives no bribe.

Now take the lowest, in a class where temptations are great, — take the custom-house officer: there are some, perhaps, who will accept a trifling fee (*pour boire*) on some insignificant occasion, but never for any thing the least suspected of fraud. Do you wish to know, now, how much he gets for this ungrateful service? Six hundred francs: rather more than thirty sous (1*s.* 3*d.*) a day; add now the nights unpaid for; he passes every other night upon the frontier, or the coast, with no other shelter but his cloak, exposed to the attack of the smuggler, and the tempestuous gale, which sometimes hurls him from the cliff into the sea. There it is, upon that strand, that his wife brings him his scanty meal; for he is married, has children; and, to feed four or five persons, has about thirty sous! A baker's boy, at Paris\*, earns more than two custom-house officers, more than a lieutenant of infantry, more than many a magistrate, more than the majority of professors; he *earns as much as six (parish) schoolmasters!*

Shame! infamy! the nation that pays the least to those that instruct the people (let us blush to confess it) is France. I speak of the France of these days. On the contrary, the true France, that of the Revolution, declared that teaching was a holy office, that the schoolmaster was equal to the priest. It laid down as a principle that the first expense of the State was instruction. The Convention, in its terrible penury, wished to give fifty-four millions (of francs) to primary instruction†, and would certainly have done so, had it lasted longer. A singular age, when men called themselves materialists, but which was, in reality, the apotheosis of the mind, the reign of the spirit.

I do not conceal it; of all the miseries of the present day, there is not one that grieves me more. The most deserving, the most miserable, the most neglected man in France is the (parish) schoolmaster.‡ The State, which does not even know what are its true

\* I mean in general, the workman at an average salary, without winter *chômage*, or slack time. See a former note, p. 32.

† Three months after the 9th Thermidor (27th Brumaire, in the year III.), upon Lakanal's report. See the "Exposé sommaire des Travaux de Lakanal," p. 135.

‡ M. Lorain, in his "Tableau de l'Instruction Primaire," an official work of the highest importance, in which he gives a summary of the Reports of 490 Inspectors who visited all the Schools in 1833, cannot find expressions strong enough to describe the state of misery and abjectness in which he found our teachers. He declares (p. 60.) that some get *altogether* but one hundred francs, some sixty, others fifty (2*l.*) a year! Moreover, they have to wait a long time for payment, which often is not forthcoming! They are not paid in money;

instruments and its strength, that does not suspect that its most powerful moral lever is this class of men,—the State, I say, abandons him to the enemies of the State.

You say that the frères (ecclesiastical teachers) teach better; I deny it. But even if it were true, what does it signify? The schoolmaster is France; the frère is Rome, the stranger, the enemy: read rather their books; note their habits and relations; flatterers of the university:—they are all Jesuits at heart.

I have spoken elsewhere of the bondage of the priest\*; it is hard and pitiable: the slave of Rome, the slave of his bishop, moreover, almost always in a position that gives to the well-informed superior a mortgage over him. Well, then, this priest, this serf, is the tyrant of the schoolmaster. The latter is not legally his subordinate, but he is his valet. His wife, a mother of a family, courts *madame*, the housekeeper, the influential favourite of monsieur, the curate. This woman, who has a family, and finds it so difficult to live, feels persuaded that a schoolmaster, on bad terms with his *curé*, is a lost man! They do not go about by two roads to overwhelm him; they do not stand trifling, saying he is an ignorant fellow; no, he is immoral, a drunkard, a ——. His children, multiplied, alas! year after year, in vain bear witness by their good conduct. The brethren alone are moral; they have certainly a few little lawsuits; but so soon hushed up.

Bondage! heavy bondage! I find it among the high and the low in every degree, crushing the most worthy, the most humble, the most deserving!

I do not speak, mark me, of hierarchical and legitimate dependency, of obedience to the natural superior. I speak of another kind, of an oblique, indirect dependency, which, beginning high, descends low, weighs heavily, penetrates, enters into details, inquiries, and wants to tyrannise even over the very soul.

A vast difference between the tradesman and the official! The former, as we have said, is condemned to lie about paltry objects of outward interest; but in what concerns his soul, he often preserves his independence. It is precisely on that side they attack the official; he is disquieted in the affairs of the soul, occasionally obliged to lie in what concerns his religious and his political creed.

every family sets apart the worst of the crop for the schoolmaster, who goes on Sunday to beg at every door with a sack on his back; he is not welcome when he claims his small lot of potatoes, *they find he is robbing the pigs!* &c. Since these official reports, new schools have been erected; but the fate of the old masters has not improved. Let us hope that the Chamber of Deputies will grant this year the increase of a hundred francs, that was demanded in vain last year.

\* See my work "Priests, Women, and Families." Longman and Co., 1845.

The wisest strive to be forgotten ; they avoid living and thinking, pretend to be nobody, and play this game so well, that they end by needing no simulation ; they become, in reality, what they wished to appear. Our officials, who are however the eyes and limbs of France, try to see no longer, nor to stir ; a body with such members must be very ill indeed.

For thus annihilating himself, does the unhappy man get off so ? Not always. The more he yields, the more he recedes, — the more they require. They go so far as to ask him for what they call pledges of devotion, positive services. He might be promoted if he made himself useful, if he informed about such and such persons, — “such a one, for instance, your colleague, is he a safe man ?”

There is a man tormented, sick. He goes home care-worn and dejected. Pressed tenderly, he confesses what is the matter. Where, think you, in this serious trial, does he find support ? In his family ? Rarely.

It is a sad, a cruel thing to say, but it must be said : man in these days is not corrupted by the world, he knows it too well ; nor by his friends. Who has friends ? — No, what corrupts him most frequently is his own family. An excellent woman, uneasy about her children, is capable of any thing, even of urging her husband to baseness, to get him promoted. A devoted mother finds it very natural that he should make his fortune by devotion ; the end sanctifies every thing : how can one sin in serving a holy cause ? What will man do, when he finds temptation in his very family, that ought to keep him from it ; when vice comes to him under the form of virtue, filial obedience, and the respect of paternal authority ?

This side of our morals is serious ; I know none more gloomy.

But that baseness, even with these appliances, that servility and Jesuitism should ever triumph in France, is what I will never believe. A repugnance for whatever is false and base is invincible in this noble country. The mass is good ; do not judge of it by the floating scum. That mass, though wavering, has yet within it an assuring power : the sentiment of military honour ever renewed by our heroic traditions. Many a one, at the moment of fainting, stops short, without knowing why, because he feels upon his face the invisible spirit of the heroes of our wars, the breath of the old flag !

Ah ! my hope is in the flag ! that it may save France, the France of the army ! May our glorious army, upon which the eyes of the world are fixed, maintain itself pure !\* May it be a sword against

\* If atrocious actions have been committed, they were commanded. May they recoil upon those who gave such orders ! — Let us remark, by the way, that, from party interest, our newspapers too often welcome the calumnious inventions of the English.

the enemy, a buckler against corruption ! may a spirit of police never enter there ! and may it ever have a horror for traitors, villainous proposals, and backstairs promotion !

What a deposit in the hands of those young soldiers ! what a responsibility for the future ! On the day of the last grand battle between civilisation and barbarism (who knows but it may be to-morrow ?), the judge must find them irreproachable, their swords pure, and their bayonets gleaming without spot ! Every time I see them pass, my heart bounds within me : “ Here, and here only, strength and mind, valour and right, those two blessings, separated throughout the earth, go hand in hand. If the world is saved by war, you will save it. Holy bayonets of France ! watch that nothing may darken that glory, impenetrable to every eye, now hovering above you.

## CHAPTER VII.

BONDAGE OF THE RICH MAN AND THE BOURGEOIS;  
THE ANCIENT BOURGEOISIE.

THE only nation that has an important army is that which is of no account in Europe. This phenomenon is not sufficiently accounted for by the weakness of a ministry or a government; it proceeds, unfortunately, from a more general cause—the decline of the governing class, so very new, yet so soon worn out—I mean the *bourgeoisie*.

I shall go back to an early date, in order the better to make myself understood.

The glorious *bourgeoisie* that shattered the middle ages, and brought about our first French Revolution, in the fourteenth century, had this peculiar character—of being a rapid transition of the people to the nobility.\* It was far less a class than a stepping-stone, a passage. Then, having finished its work in a new nobility and a new royalty, it lost its changing character, *was stereotyped*, and remained a class, too often ridiculous. The citizen (*bourgeois*) of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is a spurious being, whom nature seems to have arrested in its imperfect development, a mongrel being, graceless to behold, neither from above nor from below, that can neither walk nor fly, that is satisfied with himself, and struts with much pretension.

Our present *bourgeoisie*, produced in such quick time from our Revolution, did not, in rising, find nobles above them. They wanted so much the more to become a class all at once. They fixed themselves at their birth, and so firmly, that they fancied, rather sillily, they could engender an aristocracy; as much as to say they could extemporise an antiquity. This production has been found, as might be foreseen, not antique, but old and worn out.†

Though the *bourgeoisie* wish for nothing better than to be a separate class, it is not easy to specify the limits of this class, where it begins and where it ends. It does not comprehend exclusively

\* This transition was effected, as is well known, by the nobility of the robe. But, what is not known, is the facility with which this nobility became military in the fourteenth and fifteen centuries.

† Ancient France has three classes. New France has but two, the people and the *bourgeoisie*.

people well off, for there are many poor *bourgeois*.\* In our country places, the same man, a day-labourer here, is a *bourgeois* there, because there he has property. Hence, thank God, the *bourgeoisie* cannot, strictly speaking, be opposed to the people, as is done by some folks, which would be no less than creating two nations. Our small rural proprietors, whether they be called *bourgeois* or not, are the people, and the heart of the people.

Whether this denomination be extended or limited, what it behoves us to observe is this, that the *bourgeoisie*, which, for the last fifty years, has taken upon itself to act almost alone, seems now paralysed and incapable of action. A very recent class seems as though destined to renew it; I speak of the commercial class, created in 1815, increased in the struggles of the Restoration, and which more than any other caused the Revolution of July. Perhaps more French than the *bourgeoisie* properly so called, it is *bourgeoisie* by interest; it dare not stir. The *bourgeoisie* will not, cannot; it has lost all motion. Half a century has then sufficed to see it spring from the people, rise by its activity and energy, then suddenly, amid its triumph, sink down upon itself. There is no example of so rapid a decline.

It is not we who say so, but itself. The most melancholy confessions escape it about its own rapid decline and that of France, whom it drags down with it.

A minister said, ten years ago, in the presence of several persons, "France will be the first of the second-rate powers." That saying, then so humble, is, at the point to which things have since come, almost ambitious. So rapid is the decline!

As rapid within as without. The progress of the evil shows itself even in the discouragement of the very persons who profit by it. They can hardly be interested in a game in which nobody any longer expects to deceive anybody else. The actors are almost as much tired out as the spectators; they yawn with the public, worn out with their own efforts, and with the feeling of their decline.

\* If you observe attentively how the people employ this word, you will find that, among them, it signifies not so much riches as a certain standard of independence and leisure, the absence of care for their daily bread. Many an artisan, who earns five francs a day, says without hesitation, *Mon bourgeois*, to the famishing rentier, who enjoys an income of three hundred francs (12*L.*) a year, and walks about in a black coat in the depth of January. If security be the essential distinction of the *bourgeois*, must we include those who never know whether they are rich or poor, — the commercial class; or those again who seem more firmly established, but who, by purchasing employments or otherwise, are the serfs of the capitalist? If they are not true *bourgeois*, they nevertheless adhere to the same class, by interest, fear, and the fixed idea of "peace at any price."

One of them, a man of sense, wrote a few years ago, that great men were no longer necessary, that henceforth people would be able to do without them. 'The work told. Only, if he print it again, he must extend it, and prove this time that men of mediocrity, second-rate talents, are not indispensable, and may be done without also.

The press, ten years ago, pretended to some influence. It has laid aside its pretension. It has felt convinced, to speak only of literature, that the *bourgeoisie*, who alone read (the people scarcely read at all), had no need of art. It has consequently been able, without anybody complaining of it, to reform two expensive articles — art and criticism; it has applied to hack writers, to a firm of novel writers; then, retaining only their names, to workmen of a third-rate character.

The general decline is less felt, because it is shared by all; all descending together, the relative level is the same.

Who would say, from the little noise stirring, that we have been so noisy a nation? The ear becomes gradually accustomed to it, and so does the voice. The diapason is changed. Many a one thinks he is shouting, whilst he is only squeaking. The only noise of any compass, is that of the Exchange. He who hears it near, and sees that agitation, will too easily imagine that that torrent profoundly troubles the great stagnant marsh of the *bourgeoisie*. A mistake. It is doing the mass of *bourgeois* at once too great an injury and an honour, to suppose they have so much activity for material interests.\* They are egotists, it is true, but given to routine, inert. Except a few short feverish moments, they generally hold to their first acquisitions, which they fear to compromise. It is incredible how very easily this class, especially in the provinces, resigns itself to mediocrity in everything. They have but little, and that little only since yesterday; but provided they keep it, they settle so as to live without acting or thinking.†

\* France has not the shopkeeper spirit, except in its English moments (like that of Law, and the present one), which are exceptional fevers. This is especially seen in the facility with which the men who at first seem the most eager, generally halt early on the road to fortune. The Frenchman who has gained in trade, or otherwise, an income of a few thousand fances, fancies himself rich, and does nothing more. The Englishman, on the contrary, sees, in the wealth he has acquired, the means of becoming more rich; he perseveres in his work till death. He remains rivetted to his chain, wholly wrapped up in his business; only he pursues it on a larger scale. He does not feel the want of the leisure, which would allow him to spend his life freely.

Accordingly, there are very few rich men in France, if you except our foreign capitalists. These few rich people would be almost all poor in England. From our rich men you must deduct a number of people who make a good figure, but whose fortune is either at stake, or still uncertain, or mortgaged.

† I know, near Paris, a pretty considerable town, which counts some hundreds of proprietors or *rentiers*, of from four thousand to six thousand francs

What characterised the ancient *bourgeoisie*, what is wanting in the new one, is, especially, security.

The *bourgeoisie* of the two last centuries, firmly established on the foundation of fortunes already old, on financial and long robe dignities, which were reckoned as properties, on the monopoly of commercial corporations, &c., believed itself quite as secure in France as the monarchy. Pride, the awkward imitation of the great, was its ridicule. This aspiring to rise higher than they could, has left its stamp in the emphasis, the bombast which characterises most of the monuments of the seventeenth century.

The ridiculous feature of the new *bourgeoisie* is the contrast between its military antecedents and its present timidity, which it nowise conceals, but expresses on every occasion with singular simplicity. Should three men be in the street, talking together about wages, or should they ask the contractor for an augmentation of one sous the *bourgeoisie* is frightened, cries out, and calls for the police.

The ancient *bourgeois* was, at least, more consistent. He admired himself in his privileges, wanted to extend them, and looked upwards. Our man looks downwards, he sees the crowd ascending behind him, even as he ascended; he does not like it to mount, he retreats, and holds fast to the side of power. Does he avow to himself his retrograde tendency? Seldom; for his past is averse to it; he remains almost always in this contradictory position, a liberal in principle, an egotist in practice, wanting, yet not willing. If there remain anything French within him, he quiets it by the reading of some innocently growling, or pacifically warlike newspaper.

Most governments, we must say, have speculated upon this sad progress of fear, which is, in the end, nothing but moral death. They have thought that the dead were to be had at a cheaper price than the living. To inspire a fear of the people, they have constantly shown those terrified persons two heads of Medusa, which have at length petrified them — terror and communism.

History has not yet closely examined that unique phenomenon of terror, which no man, and assuredly no party, could restore. All that I can say here is, that, behind this popular phantasmagoria, the directors, our grand terrorists, were, by no means, men of the

a year, or rather more; who never think of going beyond that figure, who do nothing, read nothing, neither books nor (scarcely) newspapers, are interested about nothing, never visit one another, never unite, and hardly know one another. The absorbing interest of the Bourse is never felt there, but, unfortunately, it is felt among the lower class, for instance, among the saving poor in towns, and even in the country, where the peasant has not even a newspaper to enlighten him upon the snare.



people, but *bourgeois*, nobles, with cultivated, subtle, whimsical minds, sophists, and scholastics.

As to communism, to which I shall hereafter revert, one word will here suffice. The last country in which property will be abolished, will be precisely France. If, as some one of that school said, "Property is nothing but theft," we have here twenty-five millions of thieves, who will not refund in a day.

They are, nevertheless, excellent political machines to frighten those who possess, make them act contrary to their principles, or deprive them of every principle. See what a fine handle the Jesuits and their friends have made of communism, especially in Switzerland. Whenever the liberal party is gaining ground, they discover, at a given moment, and proclaim with loud clamour, some new calumny, some atrocious plot, which horrifies the good proprietors, both Protestants and Catholics, Berne as much as Fribourg.

No passion is permanent; fear less than any other. We must submit to its progress. Now, fear does this: it continues ever increasing its object, and weakening the sickly imagination. Every day, some new distrust: such an idea seems dangerous to-day; to-morrow such a man, such a class; they then shut themselves up closer and closer, they barricade, and strongly block up at once their doors and their minds; no more daylight—not the slightest crevice to admit a ray of light.

No more contact with the people. The *bourgeois* no longer knows them but by the "Gazette des Tribunaux." He sees them in his servant who robs him and laughs at him. He sees them, through his window, in the drunken man passing yonder, shouting, tumbling, and rolling in the mud. He knows not that the poor fellow is, after all, more honest than the wholesale and retail poisoners who have brought him to that sad condition.

Hard work makes hardy men and blunt language. The voice of the man of the people is rough; he has been a soldier, and always affects a military energy. The *bourgeois* concludes that his manners are violent, and very often he is mistaken. The march of time is perceptible in nothing more than in this. Lately, when an armed force rushed rudely into the house of the *mother* of the carpenters, when their money-box was broken open, their papers seized, together with their little savings, have we not seen those courageous men keep within the bounds of moderation, and refer the matter to the law?

The rich man, generally, is a man who has grown rich—the poor man of yesterday. Yesterday he was himself the artisan, the soldier, the peasant, whom he avoids to-day. I can better understand that the grandson, who was born rich, can forget that; but

that within a man's life, in thirty or forty years, one should disown himself, is inexplicable. And you, man of our warlike times, who have a hundred times faced the enemy, do not, I beseech you, fear to look your poor countrymen in the face, at whom you have been so frightened. What are they doing? Why, beginning to-day as you began. That man yonder is yourself, only younger. That young recruit, who goes away singing the *Marseillaise*,—is he not yourself, who left, when a boy, in '92? Does not the officer of Africa, full of ambition and warlike aspirations, remind you of 1804, and the camp at Boulogne? The tradesman, the artisan, the inferior manufacturer, strongly resemble those who, like you, followed fortune in 1820.

These men are like you; if they can, they will rise, and very probably by better means, being born in better times. They will gain, but you will lose nothing. Lay aside the false notion that people gain only by taking from others. Every flood of rising people brings with it a flood of new wealth.

Do you know the danger of remaining so isolated, so closely pent up? It is to imprison nothing but vacuity. By excluding men and ideas, you yourself dwindle away and become poor. You shut yourselves up in your class, your little circle of habits, where the mind and personal activity are no longer necessary. The door is well closed; but there is nobody within. Poor rich man! if you are no longer any thing, what is it you want to guard so closely?

Let us open that soul, and see whether it has any remembrance of what was, of what remains. Is there any of the young enthusiasm of the Revolution? Alas! who would find the least trace of it? The warlike strength of the empire, and the liberal aspiration of the Restoration, are no more to be seen.

We have seen this man of to-day decrease at every step that seemed to exalt him. When a peasant, he had austere morals, sobriety, and economy; when a workman, he was a good companion and a great help to his family; when a manufacturer, he was active, energetic, and had his manufacturing patriotism, which struggled against foreign industry. He has left all that on the road, and nothing has taken its place; his house is filled, his coffer is full, his soul is—empty.

Life glows and clings to life; it becomes extinct by isolation. The more it mingles with lives different from itself, the more it becomes amalgamated with other existences, and the more strongly, happily, and fruitfully does it exist. Descend in the scale of creation to the poor beings that make us doubt whether they be plants or animals, and you enter a solitude; these miserable creatures have scarcely any connexion with others. Stupid egotism! on what

side does the timid class of rich men and *bourgeois* turn their eyes? With whom will it associate? where find alliances? Precisely with what is most fluctuating, the political powers that come and go in this country, the capitalists who, on the day of revolutions, will take their ledgers and cross the channel. Proprietors, do you know who it is that will not move any more than the land itself? It is the people. Trust to them.

Rich men! the safety of France and of yourselves consists in your not being afraid of the people, in your going to them, in your knowing them, in your laying aside the fables imposed upon you, and which bear no relation to reality. You must understand one another, open your hearts, no longer gnash your teeth, and speak to one another like men.

You will go on descending, dwindling, ever declining, if you do not summon around you and adopt all that is strong and able. The question is not to have *capacities*, in the common meaning of the word. It is of no consequence if an assembly that contains a hundred and fifty advocates has three hundred. The men educated in our modern scholastics will not regenerate the world. No; it is the men of instinct, inspiration, either uncultivated or of different cultures (strangers to our proceedings, and which we do not appreciate) — these are the men whose alliance will bring life to the man of study, and practical sense to the man of business, which certainly he has latterly been in want of; this appears but too plain from the state of France.

What I ought to hope from the rich and the *bourgeois*, towards a broad, frank, generous association, I know not. They are very ill; people so far gone are not easily cured. But, I confess, I have still some hope in their sons. Those young men, such as I behold them in our schools, before my chair, have a better tendency. They have ever welcomed with a generous heart every sentence in favour of the people. Let them do more; let them give them their hands, and form early with them the alliance of common regeneration. Let not our rich youths forget that they bear a heavy load, the life of their fathers, who, in so short a time, have risen, enjoyed, and fallen; they are exhausted from their birth, and, young as they are, they have much need to grow young by imbibing the popular spirit. Their strength lies in their being still very near the people, their root, whence they have but just sprung. Well, then! Let them return to them with sympathy and heart, and get back from them a little of the vigour which, since '89, has constituted the genius, riches, and strength of France.

We are fatigued, both young and old. Why not own it, at the end of this hard day's work, which has lasted half a century? Even

they who have traversed, like me, different classes, and who, through all sorts of trials, have preserved the fruitful instinct of the people, have no less lost by the way, in inward struggles, a great part of their strength. It is late—I feel it; the evening is coming on. “Already longer shadows fall from the tops of the mountains.”

Come on, then, you, the young, the strong! Come, you workmen. We will open our arms to you. Bring back to us a new warmth; let the world, let life, let science begin again.

For my part, I fondly hope that my science, my dear study, history, will go on reviving in that popular life, and become by means of these new comers the grand and salutary thing that I had dreamed of. The historian of the people will spring from the people.

That man, doubtless, will not love them more than I. All my past life, my true country, my home, and my heart, are among them. But many things have prevented me from taking the most fertile element. The entirely abstract education that is given us hardened me for a long time. It took many long years to efface the sophist that had been created within me. I came to myself only by shaking off that foreign accessory; I have learned to know myself only by negative means. That is the reason why, sincere, passionate after truth, as I have ever been, I have not attained the ideal of sublime simplicity which I had before my mind. On you, then, young man, devolve the gifts which have been wanting in me.\* You, son of the people, being less removed from them, will come at once upon the field of their history, with their colossal strength and inexhaustible vigour; my streams will, of their own accord, come and be mingled with your torrents.

I give you all that I have done. You will give me oblivion. May my imperfect history be swallowed up in a more worthy monument, where science and inspiration better harmonise; where, among vast and searching inquiries, we perceive everywhere the vital breath of immense crowds, and the fruitful soul of the people.

\* But I ought to help beforehand, and prepare the young man. That is my object in continuing my history. A book is the means of making a better book.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## REVIEW OF THE FIRST PART—INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND.

IN glancing over this long social scale, traced in a very few pages, a multitude of ideas, of painful sentiments, a world of melancholy rushes upon me. So many physical pains! But how many more moral sufferings! Few are unknown to me; I know, I feel, I have had quite my share. I must, however, banish my own sentiments and my own memory, and follow my glimmering light through this obscure mist.

My light especially, one that will not deceive me, is France. The French sentiment, the devotedness of the citizen to his native country, is my standard for estimating these men and these classes; a moral, but also a natural standard; in every living thing, every part is especially valuable by its relation to the whole.

In nationality, as in geology, heat is below. Descend, and you will find it increases; in the inferior layers it is burning hot.

The poor love France, as being under an obligation towards her, and having duties towards her. The rich love her as belonging to them, and being under obligations to them. The patriotism of the former is the sentiment of duty; that of the others is a demand, the pretension to a right.

The peasant, as we have said, has espoused France in legitimate marriage; she is his wife for ever; he is one with her. For the artisan, she is a handsome mistress; he has nothing, but he has France, her noble past existence, her glory. Free from local ideas, he adores grand unity. He must be very miserable, enslaved by hunger or by toil, when this sentiment fades within him—it is never extinct.

The unhappy bondage of interest still augments if we ascend to the manufacturers and tradespeople. They feel themselves always in danger, and walk as if upon a tight rope. Bankruptcy! to avoid a partial bankruptcy, they would rather risk making a general one. They have made and unmade July.

And yet, can we say, that in that great class of several millions of souls, the sacred fire is extinct, absolutely, and beyond all remedy? No, I would rather believe that the flame is within them in a latent state. Foreign competition, the Englishman, will prevent them from losing the spark.

What chilliness, if I ascend higher ! It is like the cold among the Alps. I reach the snowy region. Moral vegetation gradually disappears, the national flower grows pale. It is like a world seized in one night by a sudden chill of egotism and fear. Should I ascend one step higher, even fear has ceased ; it is the pure egotism of the calculator who had no country ; no more men, only ciphers. An actual glacier abandoned by nature.\* Allow me to descend, the cold is here too powerful for me, I cannot breathe. If, as I believe, love is life itself, there is very little life up there. It seems that, viewing it from the point of national sentiment, which makes a man extend his life throughout the whole life of France, the more we ascend towards the upper classes, the less living we become.

But, as a set-off, are they less sensible to sufferings, more free, more happy ? I doubt it. I see, for instance, that the great manufacturer, so very superior to the miserable small rural proprietor, is, like him, and oftener than he, the slave of the banker. I see that the small tradesman, who has risked his savings in trade, who compromises his family (as I have explained), who is panting with uneasy expectation, envy, and rivalry, is not much happier than the workman. The latter, if he be a single man, if he can spare thirty sous for slack periods, out of his four francs of daily wages, is incomparably more merry than the shopkeeper, and more independent.

The rich man, it will be said, suffers only from his vices. And that is much ; but we must also add his *ennui*, and moral decline, the sentiment of a man who was once better, and who preserves life enough to be sensible of its decline, to see in lucid moments that he is sinking into the miseries and ridicule of a petty spirit. What can be more melancholy than to fall ever lower, and never to be able to effect any act of the will that might restore you ? From being a Frenchman to dwindle to a cosmopolite, to any kind of man, and from man to the Mollusca !

What have I intended to say in all this ? That the pauper is

\* These glaciers are not impartially indifferent like those of the Alps, which accumulate fruitful streams only to pour them out indiscriminately among the nations. The Jews, whatever be said of them, have a country, — the exchange of London : they operate everywhere, but they are rooted in the country of gold. Now that an armed peace, that motionless war, that devours Europe, has put into their hands the funds of every state, what can they love ? — The country of *statu quo*, England. What can they hate ? — the country of progress, France. They thought lately to deaden her by buying up a score of men which France refuses. Another mistake : from vanity, from an exaggerated sentiment of security, they have enlisted kings in their band, mingled with the aristocracy, and, by so doing, have become associated in political hazards. That is what their forefathers, the Jews of the middle ages, would never have done. What a decline in Jewish wisdom !

happy? that every destiny is equal? "that there is a compensation?" God forbid I should maintain so false a proposition, so well fitted to annihilate the heart, and administer consolation to egotism! Do I not see, do I not know by experience, that physical suffering, far from excluding moral suffering, is for the most part united to it; fatal sisters who agree together to crush the poor! See, for instance, the destiny of woman in our poorer quarters; she scarcely ever brings forth but for death, and finds in material wants an infinite cause of moral suffering.

In a moral and physical aspect, this society has, beyond all others, an affliction peculiar to itself; it is become infinitely sensitive. That the ordinary ills of humanity have decreased, is my own opinion, and history sufficiently proves it. But they have diminished in a finite, while sensibility has increased in an infinite, ratio. Whilst the expanded mind opened a new sphere to grief, the heart gave, by love and family ties, a new advantage to fortune. Dear opportunities of suffering, which no one assuredly would sacrifice. But how much more uneasy have they rendered life! People no longer suffer from the present only, but from the future, from what may be. The soul, all-aching in anticipation, has the sentiment and presentiment of future ill, occasionally of ills that will never happen.

To crown all, this age of extreme individual sensibility is precisely that which, doing everything by collective means, is the least inclined to spare the individual. Action, in every variety, is centralised in some grand power; and, whether he will or not, man is drawn into this whirlwind. How little his weight is there, and what becomes of his dearest thoughts, his poignant griefs, in these vast general systems, alas! who can tell? The machine rolls on, immense, majestic, and indifferent, without even knowing that its petty wheels, so cruelly ruffled, are living men.

But surely those animated wheels, which act under one and the same impulse, know each other? Surely their necessary co-operative relation must produce a moral relation? By no means. This is the strange mystery of this age; the period at which we act the most together is, perhaps, that in which hearts are the least united. The collective means which places thought in common, circulates and diffuses it, has never been greater; yet never was isolation more profound.

The mystery remains inexplicable to all who do not observe, historically, the progress of the system from which it proceeds. This system, to call it by one word, is *Machinism*; let me be permitted to state its origin.

The middle ages laid down a formula of love, and it led only to hatred. It consecrated inequality and injustice, which made love an

impossibility. The violent reaction of love and nature, called the Renaissance, did not found a new order, and seemed a disorder. The world, to which order was a necessary want, then said, "Well, let us not love; an experiment of a thousand years is sufficient. Let us seek order and strength in the union of powers; we shall find machines which will keep them united together without love, which will frame, and hold men so fast, nailed, rivetted, and screwed together, that, though detesting one another, they will act together." And then they reconstructed administrative machines, analogous to those of the old Roman empire, a bureaucracy *à la Colbert*, armies *à la Louvois*. These machines had the advantage of employing man as a regular power, — life, without its caprices and inequalities.

However, these are still men; they retain something human. The wonder of Machinism would be to do without men. Let us seek powers which, once set in motion by us, may act without us, like clockwork.

Moved *by us*? Here we still have man; that is a defect. Let Nature furnish not only the elements of the machine, but the moving power. Then it was that they created those iron workmen, which, with a hundred thousand arms, a hundred thousand teeth, comb, spin, weave, and do all manner of work; the power, — they derive it, like Antæus, from the bosom of their mother, Nature, — from the elements, from water that falls, or which, held captive and expanded in steam, animates and upheaves them with its powerful breath.

Political machines, to make our social acts uniformly those of an automaton, to relieve us from patriotism; commercial machines, which, once created, multiply monotonous products *ad infinitum*, and which, by the art of one day, dispense with our being artists every day. That is so far well; man no longer appears much. Machinism, nevertheless, wants more; man is not yet *mechanized* profoundly enough.

He preserves his solitary reflection, his philosophical meditation, the pure thought of truth. There they cannot reach him, unless a borrowed scholastic divinity drag him from himself to involve him in its formulas. When once he has set his foot in this wheel, which turns in vacuity, the thinking machine, indented in the political machine, will roll on triumphantly, and will be termed *Political Philosophy*.

But fancy still remains free, — that vain poetry which loves and creates according to its caprice. Useless movement! Sad waste of powers! Are, then, those objects, which fancy goes pursuing at random, so numerous, that we cannot, by well classing them, stamp for each class a mould, into which we shall only have to pour,



according to the wants of the day, such a novel or such a drama,—any work that may be ordered? This attained, no more men engaged in literary labour, no more passion, no more fancy. In England's eyes, the *beau idéal* of manufacturing perfection is a single machine with a single individual to set it going. How much finer is the triumph of mechanism, to have *mechanized* the fairy world of fancy!

Let us sum up this history :

The State, without the country ; industry and literature, without art ; philosophy, without research ; humanity, without man.

How can we be surprised if the world suffer, and no longer breathe under this pneumatic machine ; it has found means to do without what is its soul, its life ; I mean love.

Deceived by the middle ages, which promised union and did not keep their word, it has renounced it, and sought, in its discouragement, arts for not loving.

Machinery (not even excepting the finest commercial or administrative machines) has given to man, among so many advantages\*, an unfortunate faculty, that of uniting powers, without the necessity of a union of hearts ; of co-operating without loving ; of acting and living together, without knowing one another. The moral power of association has lost all that mechanical concentration had gained.

Wild isolation, even in co-operation itself, ungrateful contact, without either will or heat, which is felt only by the roughness of the friction. The result is not indifference, as one might suppose, but antipathy and hatred, not the mere negation of society, but the reverse ; society actively endeavouring to become unsociable.

I have, before my eyes and in my heart, the grand review of our miseries which has been made in my own case. Well ! I would affirm on oath, that among all these very real miseries, which I do not extenuate, the worst still is the wretchedness of the mind. I mean, by that, the incredible ignorance in which we live relatively to each other, practical as well as speculative men. And the principal cause of this ignorance is, that we do not think it necessary that we should know one another. The thousand mechanical means of acting without the soul, exempts us from knowing what man is, from viewing him otherwise than as a power, a cipher. Ciphers ourselves, and abstract things, disengaged from vital action by the aid of mechanism, we feel ourselves every day declining and sinking to zero.

\* I do not by any means intend to dispute these advantages (see page 21.). Who would go back to those powerless ages when man had no machines ?

I have observed, a hundred times, the perfect ignorance in which every class lives relatively to the others, not seeing, and not wanting to see.

We, for instance, with cultivated minds, what trouble have we in acknowledging whatever good qualities may be in the people! We impute to them a thousand things which depend, almost necessarily, on their situation, an old or dirty coat, an excess after long abstinence, a rude word, rough hands, what else? But what would become of us if they were less rough? We stop to consider outward things, trifles of form, and we do not see the good and great heart which is often within.

They, on the other hand, do not suspect that an energetic soul may exist in a feeble body. They laugh at the learned man for leading a cripple's life. In their opinion he is a sluggard. They have no idea of the powers of reflection, meditation, and the force of calculation made tenfold by patience. Every superiority that is not gained in war, seems to them ill-earned. How often have I perceived with a smile, that the Cross of the Legion of Honour seemed to them ill-placed upon an insignificant-looking man, with a pale, sad face.

Yes, there is a misunderstanding among us. They hold cheap the powers of study and persevering reflection which create inventions; and we ill appreciate the instinct, inspiration, and energy which beget heroes.

This is, rest assured, the greatest evil in the world. We hate and despise one another, that is, we are unknown to one another.

The partial remedies which might be applied, are, doubtless, good; but the essential remedy is a general one. We must cure the soul.

The poor suppose, that if the rich were bound down by such and such laws, all would be right—that the world would go on well. The rich think, that in restoring the poor to such and such religious forms, extinct for two centuries, they are strengthening society. Fine topics! They imagine, apparently, these political or religious formulas to have a cabalistic power to charm the world; as if their power was not in the harmony which they find or do not find in the heart!

The evil is in the heart. Let the remedy be also in the heart! Lay aside your old receipts. The heart must open, and so must our arms. Why! they are your brothers after all: had you forgotten that?

I do not say that this or that form of association may not be excellent; but the question at first is far less about the form than the foundation. The most ingenious forms will not be of much service to you if you are unsociable.

Between men of study and reflection, and men of instinct, who is to make the first advances? We, the men of study. The obstacle (whether repugnance, idleness, or indifference) is frivolous on our side. On theirs the obstacle is truly serious; it is the fatality of ignorance — it is suffering, which withers and hardens the heart.

The people reflect, doubtless, and often more than we; nevertheless, what characterises them is their instinctive powers, which belong equally to the mind and to the body. The man of the people is especially a man of instinct and action.

The disunion of the world is principally the absurd opposition which has been formed in our days, in this age of machinery, between instinct and reflection; it is the contempt which the latter entertains for instinctive faculties, which it believes it can do without.

Hence I must explain what instinct and inspiration are, and lay down their law. Follow me, I beseech you, in this inquiry: it is the condition of my subject. The political city will then only be acquainted with itself, its evils and remedies, when it shall have seen itself reflected in the mirror of the moral city.

## PART II.

## ENFRANCHISEMENT BY LOVE. — NATURE.

## CHAPTER I.

## INSTINCT OF THE PEOPLE, HITHERTO LITTLE STUDIED.

ABOUT to enter on this vast and difficult inquiry, it is not very encouraging to reflect that I am alone on this road ; I meet nobody from whom I can derive assistance. I am alone ; but I will nevertheless march forward, full of courage and hope.

Noble writers, of an aristocratical genius, who had always sketched the manners of the upper classes, have bethought themselves of the people ; they have undertaken, with a benevolent intention, to bring the people into fashion. They have gone down from their saloons into the street, and inquired of the passengers where the people lived. They were directed to the galleys, the prisons, and the low neighbourhoods.

The result of this misunderstanding is very sad ; for they have produced an effect contrary to that which they intended. In order to interest us in the people, they have chosen, depicted, and related things which would naturally disgust and frighten us. “What ! are the people so constituted ?” cried, with one voice, the timid race of citizens. “Haste ! let us increase our police, arm ourselves, shut our doors, and bolt them !” It is found, however, on well considering things, that these artists, famous dramatists, before every thing else, have depicted, under the name of the people, a very limited class, whose life, full of incidents, violence, and felony, offered them an easy, picturesque effect, and success, by means of terror.

All, whether writers of criminal law, economists, or sketchers of manners, have, almost exclusively, studied an exceptional people, that unclassed class, which frightens us every year with the progress of crime and the number of old offenders. It is a well-known people, who, thanks to the publicity of our tribunals, and the conscientious slowness of our law courts, occupies a place in public attention, such as it obtains in no other country in Europe.

The secret law proceedings of Germany, and the rapid administration of justice in England, give to their imprisoned or transported criminals no kind of *éclat*. England, twice or thrice richer than France in this respect, does not thus display her wounds. Here, on the contrary, there is no class that obtains the honours of a more complete publicity. A strange society living at the expense of the other, yet followed by it with interest: they have their newspapers to register their gestures, arrange their words, and give them cleverness. They have their heroes and illustrious men, whom all the world knows by name, and who come periodically to the assizes to relate their campaigns.

• This chosen tribe that is almost solely privileged to sit before these painters of the people, is principally recruited from the populace of large towns: and no class contributes more to it than the working class.

Here, again, our *criminalists* have held sway over opinion; it is under their auspices that our economists have studied what they call *the people*. In their opinion *the people* is especially the workman, and most especially the workman in manufactories. This mode of speech, which would not be out of place in England, where the working population form two thirds of the whole, is singularly so in France — a great agricultural nation, where the working classes do not constitute a sixth part of the population.\* It is, no doubt, a numerous class, but, after all, a small minority. They who go to find their models there, have no right to inscribe beneath, “This is a portrait of the people.”

Examine well those witty but corrupt crowds of our cities, which so much strike the observer: listen to their language, note their flashes of wit, often happy, and you will discover something that nobody has yet spoken of, — viz. that these people, who sometimes know not how to read, have, nevertheless, in their own way, highly cultivated minds.

Men who live together, ever in contact with one another, necessarily develop themselves by the mere fact thereof, as by the effect of natural warmth. They give each other an education, — a bad one, if you please, but still an education.

The simple sight of a great city, where, without intending to learn any thing, we are instructed every instant, and where, in order to be acquainted with a thousand new things, it is sufficient to go into the street, and walk with our eyes open, — this sight, this city, be assured, is a school. They who live there do not live an in-

\* And of this sixth, the manufactory-workman forms a very trifling portion.

instinctive, natural life; they are men of cultivated minds, who observe more or less, and reflect well or ill. I find them often very subtle, viciously cunning. The effects of a refined culture are there but too plainly visible. If you would find something in the world contrary to nature, directly opposed to all the instincts of childhood, look at that artificial creature denominated the *gamin de Paris*.<sup>\*</sup> Still more artificial is the youngest imp of Satan, the horrible boy-man of London, who, at twelve years of age, trades, robs, drinks gin, and goes with the girls. Artists, such are your models! The fantastical, the exceptional, the monstrous, that is what you seek. Are you moralists, or are you caricaturists? What difference is there now? One day there came a man to the famous Themistocles, and proposed to him an art of memory. He answered bitterly, "Give me, rather, the art of forgetfulness."

May God give me this art, to forget from this moment all your monsters, your fantastic creations, those shocking exceptions, with which you perplex my subject! You go about, spy-glass in hand; you hunt in the gutters, and find there some dirty, filthy object, and bring it to us, exclaiming, "Triumph! we have found the people!"

To interest us in them, they show them to us forcing doors and picking locks. To these picturesque descriptions they add those profound theories, by which the people, if we listen to them, justify themselves in their own eyes for this warfare against property. Truly, it is a frightful misery, in addition to so many others, for them to have these imprudent friends. These acts and these theories are not at all of the people. The mass is doubtless neither pure nor irreproachable; but still, if you want to characterise it by the idea which prevails in the immense majority, you will find it occupied, quite on the contrary, in founding, by toil, economy, and the most respectable means, the immense work which constitutes the strength of this country, the participation of all classes in property.

I said, I feel I am alone, and I should be sad, indeed, if I had not with me my faith and hope. I see myself weak, both by nature and my previous works, in presence of this mighty subject, as at the foot of a gigantic monument, that I must move all alone. Alas! how disfigured it is to-day! how loaded with foreign accumulations, moss, and mouldiness, spoilt by the rain and mud, and by the injuries it has received from passengiers! The painter, the man of *art for art*, comes and looks at it; what pleases him is precisely that moss. But I would pluck it off. Painter, now passing by! this is not a plaything of art, mind you, — this is our altar!

<sup>\*</sup> It is a marvel in the national character, that this abandoned child, incited to evil, and over-excited in every manner, retains some good qualities, wit and courage.

I must dig away the earth, and discover the deep foundation of this monument ; the inscription I see, is now quite buried, hidden very far under ground : to 'dig there I have neither pickaxe, spade, nor mattock ; my nails shall suffice.

I shall, perhaps, be as fortunate as I was ten years ago, when I discovered two curious monuments at Holyrood. I was in the famous chapel, which, having been long unroofed, is exposed to rain and fogs, which have clothed all its tombs with thick green moss. The remembrance of the old alliance, so unfortunately lost, made me regret that I was not able to read anything on those tombs of the old friends of France. Mechanically I scraped away the moss from one of these stones, and read the inscription of a Frenchman, who had been the first paver of Edinburgh. My curiosity being excited, led me to another stone with a death's head sculptured upon it. This tomb, quite sunken, was itself buried and shrouded in mouldiness. I scratched away with my nails, having no other instrument, and I began to read something of a Latin inscription, four words almost effaced, which I at length deciphered — words of a very serious import, well fitted to cause reflection, and raise the suspicion of a tragical end — “*Legibus fidus, non regibus :*” Faithful to laws, not to kings.\*

And now I dig again ; I would get to the bottom of this earth. But this time it is not a monument of hatred and civil war that I would disinter. What I want is, on the contrary, to find, in descending below this sterile, cold ground, those depths where social heat begins, where the treasures of universal life are kept, and where the dried up fountains of love would again gush out for all the world.

\* Here is the whole inscription as I read, or fancied I read it, for it was almost effaced beneath the moss of three centuries : — *W. Harter. Legibus fidus, non regibus. Januarius. 1588.*

## CHAPTER II.

## THE INSTINCT OF THE PEOPLE WEAKENED, BUT STILL POWERFUL.

CRITICISM waits for my first word, and imposes silence on me: "You have made, in a hundred and odd pages, a long balance of social miseries, of the bondage attached to every condition. We have been patient, in the hope that, after the evils, we should at length learn the remedies. To evils so real, so positive, and so specified, we expect that you will offer something better than vague words, a hackneyed sentimentality, moral and metaphysical remedies. Propose special reforms; draw up, for every abuse, a neat formula of what must be changed; address it to the Chambers. Or, if you confine yourself to lamentations and reveries, you would do better to return to your middle ages, which you ought not to have quitted."

Special remedies have not been wanting; I fancy we have some fifty thousand in the *Bulletin des lois*; we add more to them every day, but I do not see that we improve. Our legislative physicians treat every symptom which appears in this or that place as a distinct and particular case, and expect to cure it by some local application. They little know the profound bond of union of all the parts of the social body, and that of all the questions which relate to it.\* Herodotus tells us that the Egyptians, in the infancy of science, had different physicians for every part of the body; one attended to the nose, another to the ear, a third to the belly, &c. They cared little whether their remedies harmonised; each of them worked apart, without disturbing the others; if, each separate member being cured, the man still died, that was his own affair.

I have, I confess, formed a different standard of medicine. It seemed to me, that before every external and local remedy, it would

\* For instance, they would not see that the penitentiary question was a corollary of that of public instruction. Whether the question be to form or reform man, to raise or relieve him, it is not the mason, but the teacher, that the State should invoke—the religious, moral, and national instructor, who will speak in the name of God and in the name of France. I have seen many a miserable creature, supposed to be desperately depraved, and upon whom the sentiment of morality and religion would have had no effect, still preserve that of his native country.



not be amiss to inquire into the inward evil that produces all these symptoms. This evil is, in my opinion, the chill, the paralysis of the heart, which creates insociability; and the latter is especially connected with the false notion that we may *isolate* ourselves with impunity, that we have no need of others. The wealthy and educated classes imagine especially that they have nothing to do with the instinct of the people, that their book knowledge is sufficient for every thing, and that men of action would teach them nothing. To enlighten them, I have been obliged to explore what is fruitful in the instinctive and active faculties. This road was long, but legitimate, which no other was.

I bring to this inquiry three qualities. When I said just now I was alone, I was wrong. First, I bring with me *the observation of the present*, which is so much more important that, in my case, it is not only outward, but inward also. A son of the people, I have lived with them, I know them, they are myself. How could I, being thus in the heart of things, go astray, like others, take the exception for the rule, monstrosities for nature? Secondly, my next advantage is, that thinking less about this or that novelty in manners, this or that special class of yesterday, but keeping myself in the legitimate universality of the mass, I easily connect it again with its *past*. Changes in inferior classes are much slower than in the upper. I do not find this class produced on a sudden, at random, like an ephemeral monster, bursting from the earth; but I see it descending by a legitimate descent from the bosom of history. Life is less mysterious when we know the birth, forefathers, and antecedents; when we have seen how the living being existed, so to speak, long before he was born. Thirdly, taking this people thus in their *present* and in their *past*, I see their necessary relations re-established with other nations, whatever be the degree of civilisation or barbarism they have attained. They all expound and comment upon one another. To any question that you put to one, the other replies. Many a particular, for instance, in the habits of our mountaineers of the Pyrenees, or of Auvergne, you may consider clownish. I consider it barbarous; as such, I comprehend it, class it, and know its proper place and value in the general existence. How many things, half effaced in the manners of our people, seem inexplicable, devoid of reason and sense, but which, re-appearing to me in their harmony, with primitive inspiration, are found to be nothing else but the wisdom of a forgotten world. Poor shapeless fragments, that I met without recognising, but which, from some feeling or other, I would not leave grovelling in the dust; I picked them up at random, and filled the folds of my mantle with them. Then, upon considering them attentively, I discovered, with religious emo-

tion, that what I had collected was neither stone nor flint, but the bones of my fathers.\*

This criticism of the present by the past, by the varied comparison of nations and different ages, I was unable to make in this little book. It has nevertheless helped me to control and clear up the results which observation, reading, and information of every kind afforded me upon our present manners.

“But,” it will be said, “is not this control dangerous in itself? Is not this criticism fool-hardy? Do the people that we see possess any important relation to their original source? Common-place to such a degree, can they remind us in the slightest of those tribes, which, in their savage state, still retain a poetic flame? We do not pretend that fecundity or creative power has been ever wanting in popular masses. In the savage or barbarous state, they produce, as the national songs of all primitive nations sufficiently testify. They produce also, when transformed by culture; they approach the higher classes, and mingle with them. But a people that has neither primitive inspiration nor culture, that is, is neither civilised nor savage, but in an intermediate state, at once vulgar and rude, does not such a people remain impotent? The savages themselves, who are naturally gifted with much noble feeling and poetry, are disgusted in seeing our emigrants, the members of these brutal populations.”

I do not dispute the state of depression, of physical and occasionally moral degeneration, in which the people are now found, especially the town population. The whole mass of oppressive toils, all the burden which, in ancient times, the slave bore alone, is now found parcelled out among the free men of the lower classes. All partake of the miseries, material vulgarities, and turpitude of slavery. The most fortunate races, our handsome races of the south, for instance, so lively and merry, are sadly broken down by work. The worst is, that at the present day, the soul is often as much crushed as the shoulders; misery, want, the dread of the usurer or the tax-gatherer—what is less poetical?

The people have less poetry in themselves, and find less in the society that surrounds them. That society has seldom, if at all, the kind of poetry they can appreciate, the absorbing interest in the picturesque or pathetic. If it has a high class of poetry, it is in frequently very complicated harmonies, which an inexperienced eye cannot discern.

Man, poor and alone, surrounded by those immense objects, those

\* They who are acquainted with my book on the “*Origines du Droit*,” will well understand this.

enormous collective powers, which hurl him along, without his understanding them, feels himself weak and humiliated. He has none of that pride which formerly rendered individual genius so powerful. If interpretation is withheld, he stands discouraged before that grand society which seems to him so strong, so wise, and so learned. Whatever comes from that centre of light is accepted by him, and preferred, without hesitation, to his own conceptions. In presence of this wisdom, the humble popular muse is mute, and dares not breathe. The first comer may overawe this rustic muse, silence her, or even make her sing her own songs. Even so, we have seen Beranger, in his exquisite and nobly classic mood, become the national songster, invade the whole mass of the people, drive out the old village songs, and even the ancient rhymes sung by our sailors. Our artisan-poets have lately imitated the rhythms of Lamartine, disinheriting themselves, as much as they could, and too often sacrificing whatever they might possess of popular originality.

The fault of the people, when they write, is ever to abandon their heart, which is their stronghold, to go and borrow abstractions and vague generalities from the upper classes. They have a great advantage, but do not appreciate it—that of not knowing the conventional language, of not being, as we are, besieged, pursued, by ready-made sentences, formulas, which present themselves of their own accord, when we write, and take their places upon our paper. And yet this is precisely what our studious workmen envy us, and borrow from us as far as they can. They dress, put on gloves to write, and thus lose the superiority which the people derive, when they know how to use it, from their strong and powerful arms.

What does it matter? Why ask men of action what are their writings? The true products of popular genius are not books, but courageous deeds, witty sayings, glowing and inspired language, such as I note every day in the street, proceeding from a vulgar mouth, apparently the most unlikely to be made for inspiration. Moreover, take from that man, now so repulsive by his vulgarity, his old clothes, put him in uniform, with a sabre, a gun, a drum, and a flag before him. He is no longer to be recognised; he is another man. Where is the former?—Impossible to find him.

This depression, this degeneration, is only superficial. The groundwork remains. This race has always wine in its blood; even in those who seem the most extinct, you will find a spark. Ever a military energy; ever a brave carelessness; ever a grand exhibition of an independent spirit. This independence, which they know not where to place (shackled, as they are, on every side), they too often throw into vicious courses, and boast of being worse than they are. Exactly the reverse of the English.

Shackles without, and a strong life broaching its claims within,—this contrast produces many false movements, a discordance in word and deed, which shocks at first sight. It is the cause, also, why aristocratic Europe delights to confound the people of France with the imaginative and gesticulating nations, such as the Italians, the Irish, the Welsh, &c.

What distinguishes our people from them, in a very decided and distinct manner, is, that in their greatest transports, in their sallies of imagination, in what people are pleased to call their fits of Don Quixotism, they still preserve common sense. In their most violent paroxysms, a firm, serious language shows that the man has not lost his balance, that he is not the dupe of his own excitement.

This relates to the French character in general. To revert to the people in particular, let us remark, that the instinct which predominates in them gives them an immense advantage for action. The reflecting mind reaches action only after passing through the process of deliberation and discussion; it has to traverse so many things that it frequently never arrives. On the contrary, the instinctive thought *touches the act*, is almost the act itself; it is almost at the same moment thought and deed. The classes that we call inferior, and which follow instinct more closely, are, for that very reason, eminently capable of action, ever ready to act. But we, cultivated minds, chat, dispute, and spend all our energy in words. We become enervated by mental dissipation, by the vain amusement of running from book to book, or of opposing them one to another. We show great anger about trifles, and loudly threaten to proceed to action. But that said, we do nothing, we do not act. We pass on to other disputes.

They, on the contrary, do not speak so much, do not make themselves hoarse with shouting, like learned men and old women. But should an opportunity occur, they take advantage of it, without making a noise about it, and act with vigour. Their economy in words aids their energy in deeds. That settled, let us take, as judges between these classes, the heroic men of antiquity, or of the middle ages, and ask them, which of them constitute the aristocracy? Without the least hesitation, they will answer, "Those who act."

If we preferred placing superiority in good sense and sound judgment, I know not in what class we should find a more sensible man than the old French peasant. Without speaking of his sagacity in matters of interest, he knows mankind well, and divines that society which he has not seen. He possesses much inward reflection, and a singular foreknowledge of natural occurrences. He prognosticates of the sky, and sometimes of the land, better than an augur of antiquity.

Under the appearance of a life of pure materialism and vegetation, those people think and muse ; and what is musing in the youth becomes reflection and wisdom in the old man. As for us, we have every appliance that can provoke, sustain, and fix meditation. But, on the other hand, being more wrapt up in life, pleasures, and empty conversations, we can seldom reflect, and we wish to do so even less. The man of the people, on the contrary, is often sentenced to solitude by the nature of his work. *Isolated* by the culture of the fields, and by the noisy trades which create a solitude in the very crowd, if he will not die of *ennui*, his soul must necessarily turn round and converse with herself.

The women of the people particularly, obliged more than any others to be the providence of the family, even of their husband, forced every day to use towards him a fund of address and virtuous stratagems, occasionally attain in the long run an astonishing degree of maturity. I have seen some, who, towards the decline of life — having preserved their best instincts through so many rude trials, having always cultivated their minds by reflection, and, being exalted by the natural advancement of a devoted and pure life — belonged no longer at all to their own class, nor, I think, to any other, but were truly superior to all. They were endowed with extraordinary prudence and penetration, even in matters upon which you would have supposed they had no experience whatever. They saw with so keen a glance into probabilities, that people would fain have believed them gifted with a prophetic soul. Nowhere did I ever meet with such a union of two particulars, which are generally believed to be very distinct, and even opposite, — worldly wisdom and a religious spirit.

## CHAPTER III.

DO THE PEOPLE GAIN MUCH IN SACRIFICING THEIR INSTINCT?  
SPURIOUS CLASSES.

THIS peasant of whom we are speaking — this man, so circumspect, so wise, has, however, one fixed idea ; it is, that his son must not be a peasant, but must rise and become a citizen. He realises his idea but too well. This son, who finishes his education, and becomes *Monsieur le Curé*, *Monsieur l'Avocat*, or *Monsieur le Fabricant*, you will easily recognise. Ruddy, and of a hardy race, he will fill every thing, occupy every thing, with his vulgar activity ; he will be a great talker, a politician, a man of weight, of grand views, who has no longer anything in common with humble people. You will find him everywhere in the world, with a voice drowning every thing, and concealing under the finest white kid glove the coarse big hands of his father.

I express myself badly ; the father had strong hands, the son has big ones. The father, doubtless, was more muscular and more shrewd. He was much nearer the aristocracy. He did not speak so much, but it was to the purpose.

Has the son risen higher in quitting his father's condition ? Has there been progress from one to the other ? Yes : no doubt, in regard to cultivation and knowledge ; but not so in regard to originality and real distinction.

They are now all quitting their condition ; they rise, or think they are rising. Five hundred thousand workmen, within thirty years, have taken out licences and become masters. The number of country day-labourers who have become proprietors is incalculable. The professions, termed liberal, have been recruited immensely from the inferior ranks ; they are now choke-full.

A profound change in ideas and morality has been the consequence of all this. Man conforms his soul to his material situation. Strange ! There is a poor soul, a rich soul, and a commercial soul. Man seems to be nothing but the accessory of fortune.

There has been among the different classes not a union, or an association, but a rapid and gross amalgamation. Doubtless this was necessary to neutralise the otherwise insurmountable obstacles which presented themselves before the new equality. But this change has nevertheless been the cause of stamping art, literature, and every

thing with great vulgarity. Persons well off, even the rich, supply themselves marvellously with common articles at a low rate; you will find in many a house of great style, common, ugly, and mean articles: they want art, but cheap. The thing which constitutes true nobility, *the power of sacrifice*, is that which is wanting in the man grown rich. He is as destitute of it in art as in politics; he is unwilling to sacrifice any thing, even in his own real interest. This moral infirmity pursues him even in his enjoyments and vanities, rendering them vulgar and paltry.

Will this class of all classes, this spurious mixture which has been composed so quickly, and which is already dwindling away, ever be productive? I doubt it. The mule is barren.

• A nation which, compared to military ones (such as France, Poland, &c.), seems to me eminently *bourgeois* — the English — may enlighten us as to the future prospects of our *bourgeoisie*. No other in the world had more class changes, and none has used more address to disguise as noblemen the man grown rich, — the son of the tradesman. The latter, who, in the last two centuries, have renewed all the English nobility, have paid particular attention to preserve, together with the names and arms, the venerable manors, furniture, and hereditary collections; they have gone so far as to copy in manners and characters the ancient families whose homes they occupy. With constant pride they have in their attitude, language, and every outward form, represented and acted those old barons. Well! what have they produced with all that labour, that art of preserving tradition and fabricating antiquity? They have created an important nobility, of much persevering genius, but at bottom of very few resources, and very little political invention, and by no means worthy of the great position which the British empire occupies, and is destined to occupy hereafter. Where is, I pray you, the England of Shakspeare and Bacon? The citizens (disguised or ennobled, I care not which), have governed ever since Cromwell; power and riches have incalculably augmented; the average ratio of culture has risen; but at the same time a certain sad uniformity has established itself among the *gentlemen*, — a universal resemblance of men and things. You can scarcely distinguish in their elegant penmanship one letter from another, nor in their towns one house from another, nor in their people one Englishman from another.

To return: I would willingly believe that in the time to come great originality of invention will belong to men who will not be lost in that spurious mediocrity in which all native character is enervated. Strong men will be found who will not want to rise; who, being born of the people, will wish to remain of the people. To rise to a comfortable position, all well and good; but to enter the citizen

class, and change their condition and habits, will appear to them any thing but desirable ; they will feel assured that they would gain little by it. Vigour, the comprehensive instinct of the masses, moral courage, — all that is better preserved in the workman when he is not crushed by work, and when his life is somewhat easy, and allows him leisure.

I have before my eyes two instances of men who, though gifted with sense, had no wish to rise. One, a workman in a manufactory, intelligent and reflecting, had always refused to be a foreman, dreading the responsibility, the reproaches, and the unpleasant contact with the manufacturer, preferring to work in silence alone with his thoughts. His admirable peace of mind, which reminded one of the mystic workmen of whom I have spoken, was lost if he had accepted this new position.

The other, the son of a shoemaker, having finished his classical education, even his study of the law, and after being admitted an advocate, resigned himself without a murmur to the necessities of his family, and resumed his father's trade, showing that a strong mind can rise or descend with equal ease. His resignation has been rewarded. This man, who did not seek for glory, receives it now in the person of his son, who, endowed with a singular gift, imbibed from the trade itself the sentiment of art, and has now become one of the greatest painters of our age.

The continual changes of conditions, trades, and habits, prevent every kind of inward perfection ; they produce those amalgamations which are at once vulgar, assuming, and barren. He who would change the proportion of strings in an instrument, and, under the pretext of improving them, would reduce them all to one common standard, would, in fact, have annulled them all, made the instrument useless, and harmony impossible.

To remain one's self is a great power, a chance of originality. If fortune change, so much the better ; but let nature remain. The man of the people should look well to it before he stifles his instinct, to put himself in the train of the fine *bourgeois* spirits. If he remains true to his trade and change it, like Jacquart ; if out of a trade he form an art, like Bernard Palissy, what greater glory would he have in this world ?



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE SIMPLE—THE CHILD, THE INTERPRETER OF THE PEOPLE.

HE who would know the highest gifts of the instinct of the people, ought to pay little attention to the mixed, spurious, half-cultivated minds, which partake of the qualities and defects of the citizen classes. What he ought to seek and study are especially the simple.

The simple are in general those who little distract their minds ; who, not being armed with the machinery of analysis and abstraction, see every thing as one, entire, concrete, as life presents it.

The simple form a great people. There are the simple by nature, the simple by culture, the poor in intellect, who will never distinguish, children who do not yet distinguish, the peasants, and the common multitude, who are not used to distinguish.

The scholastic, the critic, or the man of analysis, of *nisi* and *distinguo*, looks down from his eminence upon the simple. They have, however, the advantage, as they never divide, of seeing things in their natural state, organised, and living. Little inclined to reflection, they are often rich in instinct. Inspiration is not uncommon in these classes — it is sometimes even a kind of divination. Among them are found persons quite apart, who preserve in a dull unimaginative life what is the highest moral poetry, the simplicity of the heart. Nothing is more uncommon than the preservation of these gifts of childhood ; to do so implies generally a special grace and a species of holiness.

It would be necessary to have that grace to be able only to speak of it. Science, it is true, by no means excludes simplicity ; but it does not give it. The will has little to do with it.

The great civilian of Toulouse, at the most difficult point in his work, pauses, and beseeches his auditory to pray that he may have a special light to guide him in such subtle matter. How much more do we need it ! I, and you, my friends, who read me ! How great is our need to obtain, not a gift of subtility, but, on the contrary, of simplicity and a childlike heart !

Sages must no longer remain satisfied with saying, — “ Let the little ones come unto me.” They must go to them ; they have much to learn in the midst of those children. The best thing they can do

is, to postpone their study, lock up their books, that have been of so little use to them, and go fairly among mothers and nurses to unlearn and forget.

To forget? No, but much rather to reform their wisdom, and control it by the instinct of those who are nearer to God; to rectify it, by placing it beside this small standard, and say that the science of the three worlds does not contain more than lies in that cradle.

To speak only of our present subject, nobody will dive deeply into it who has not well observed the child. The child is the interpreter of the people. What do I say? It is the people themselves, in their native truth, before they are deformed; the people without vulgarity, rudeness, or envy, inspiring neither distrust nor repugnance. Not only does it interpret them, but justifies and acquits them on many occasions; many a word that you find rude and coarse in the mouth of a rude man, you think natural (as it truly is) in the mouth of your child; you thus learn to guard against unjust prejudices. The child being, like the people, in a happy ignorance of conventional language, formulas, and ready-made sentences, which relieve us from invention, shows you, by its example, how much the people are obliged to seek its language, and to find it incessantly: both often find it with a happy energy.

It is, moreover, by the child that you may appreciate what is still young and primitive in the people, changed though they be. Your son, like the peasant of Brittany or of the Pyrenees, speaks at every instant the language of the Bible or the Iliad. The boldest criticism of Vico, Wolf, or Niebuhr, is nothing in comparison to the luminous and profound flashes which certain words of the child will suddenly open to you in the darkness of antiquity. How often, in observing the historical and *narrative* form that he gives to even abstract ideas, may you perceive how infant nations must have *narrated* their dogmas in legends, and made a *history* of every moral truth! It is there, O sages, that we must remain silent. Let us form a circle, and listen to this young master of by-gone ages; he has no need to analyse what he says, in order to instruct us; but he is like a living witness, — “he was there, and knows the story better.”

In him, as in young nations, every thing is still concentrated, in a *concrete* and living state. It is sufficient to look at him, to perceive the singularly *abstract* state which we have attained in the present day. Many hollow abstractions cannot stand this examination. Our children of France especially, who are so lively and talkative, with a fund of very precocious good sense, are incessantly bringing us back to realities. These innocent critics never fail to become embarrassing to the philosopher. Their simple questions too often present to him the insolvable difficulty of things. They have not learned, like

us, to turn aside difficulties, to avoid certain problems, which it seems to be an agreement among philosophers never to meddle with. Their bold little logic ever goes straight forward. No pompous absurdity would have maintained itself in this world, if mankind had not silenced the objections of the child. From four to twelve years of age especially, is their reasoning period; between lactation and puberty, they seem lighter, less material, more sprightly in mind, than they afterwards are. An eminent grammarian, who would never live with any but children, told me that, at that age, he found in them a capacity for the most subtle abstractions.

They lose an infinite deal in developing so fast, in passing rapidly from the life of instinct to the life of reflection. Till then, they were living upon the large fund of instinct, they were swimming in a sea of milk. When from that obscure and fruitful sea logic begins to disentangle a few luminous threads, there is, doubtless, progress, a necessary progress, one of the conditions of life; but this progress is, nevertheless, in one sense a decline. The child then becomes man, but he was a little god.

Early infancy and death are the moments when infinity, *grace*, shine forth in man, whether we take the word in the acceptation of art, or of theology. Grace, lively in the infant that plays and makes an attempt at life; grace, austere and solemn in the dying man, when life is ending; but ever grace divine. Nothing could make us better perceive the truth of the grand biblical saying, — “You are gods, you shall be as gods.”

Apelles and Correggio studied incessantly these divine moments. Correggio passed whole days in seeing infants play. Apelles, says one of the ancients, delighted in painting none but the dying.

On these days of arrival, departure, and transition between two worlds, man seems to combine them altogether.\* The instinctive life in which he is then plunged, is like the dawn and the twilight of the mind, doubtless more vague than thought, but how much more vast! All the intermediate work of reasoning and reflecting life is like a straight line, which starts from the misty regions of boundless space, and returns back to them. If you want to perceive it well, study closely the infant, or the dying. Place yourself at their pillow, observe, and be silent.

\* The horror of the fatal enigma, the seal that shuts the mouth at the moment one knows the word, all that has once been grasped in a sublime work, that I discovered in an enclosed part of Père la Chaise, in the cemetery of the Jews. It is a bust by Préault, or rather a head, held and clasped in its shroud, with its finger pressed upon its lips — a truly fearful work, whose impression the heart can scarcely withstand, and which appears to have been sculptured by the great chisel of death.

I have, unhappily, had too many opportunities of contemplating the approach of death to persons very dear to me. I remember, especially, a long winter's day that I spent between the bed of a dying woman and the reading of Isaiah. This very painful scene was that of a combat between watching and sleeping, a toilsome dream of the struggling and sinking soul. Her eyes, swimming in the void, expressed, with painful truth, uncertainty between two worlds. The mind, obscure and vast, rolled along the traversed space of life, and expanded with immense presentiments. The witness of this great struggle who participated in its ebb and flow, and all its anxieties, held fast, as in a shipwreck, to the firm belief, that a soul which, even in returning to our primitive instincts, already anticipated that of the unknown world, could not pass that way to annihilation.

Every thing implied rather that she was about to endow, with that double instinct, some young existence that would more happily resume the work of life, and impart to the dreams of that soul, to its latent ideas, and mute desires, the language that had failed them.\*

One thing ever strikes us in observing children and the dying, viz. the perfect nobleness with which Nature impresses them. Man is born noble, and dies noble; it requires all the labour of life to become coarse, ignoble, — to produce the difference!

Behold that child whom his mother, kneeling, so well termed *her Jesus*. Society or education have very soon altered him. The *infinite* that was in him and deified him, is disappearing; he characterises himself and specifies himself, it is true, but he contracts. Logic and criticism hew and sculpture without mercy whatever seems an entire block within him; cruel statuaries, whose chisel cuts into that too tender substance, every stroke chipping off whole pieces! Alas! how meagre and mutilated he is already! Where is now the noble amplitude of his nature? The worst is, that under the influence of so rude an education, he will not only be weak and sterile, but will become vulgar.

\* "The grandfather receives the infant, when it springs to life from its mother. — 'Lo! thou art there, O my soul, to sleep anew in a body.'" (Indian laws, quoted in my "*Origines du Droit*.") Without admitting the hypothesis of the transmigration of souls (still less that of the transmission of sins), one is much tempted to believe that our first instincts are the mind of our ancestors, which the young traveller brings with him as provisions for his journey. He adds much to them. If I lay aside theories, and shut up books to consider nature, I see thought spring up within us, like an obscure instinct, gleam through twilight, enlighten and develop itself by the light of reflection; then, becoming a formula, and being more and more accepted as one, pass into our habits, into the things that are fitted for us, which we no longer examine, and then, obscured again, become a portion of our instincts.

When we regret our childhood, it is not so much life, the years that were then before us, as our nobleness, that we regret. We had then, indeed, that simple dignity of the being that has not yet been bent,—equality with all; then all were young, all handsome, all free. Let us be patient, that must return: inequality is only for life; equality, liberty, nobleness, every thing returns to us at our death.

Alas! that moment returns but too soon for the greater number of children. People are willing to see, in childhood, only an apprenticeship for life, a preparation to live,—and the greater number do not live. They want them to be happy “hereafter,” and to insure the happiness of those uncertain years, they overload with *ennui* and sorrow the brief moment which is already insured.\*

No, infancy is not only an age, a stage in life, it is a people, the innocent people. That flower of the human race which, generally, is short-lived, follows Nature, to whose bosom it is soon to return. And it is precisely Nature that they want to subdue in it. Man, who, in his own case, retreats from the barbarity of the middle ages, still maintains it towards the child, ever starting from the inhuman principle, that our nature is bad, that education is not its good economy, but its reformation, that art and human wisdom ought to amend and chastise the instinct that God has implanted within us.

\* I do not speak of the overloading with work, nor of the innumerable and excessive punishments that we inflict upon their changeful character, ordained by Nature herself, but of the silly cruelty which causes us to plunge, rudely and incautiously, into cold abstractions, a young being, just come from the maternal bosom, still warm, and which only wants to unfold its blossoms.

## CHAPTER V.

CONTINUATION — IS THE NATURAL INSTINCT OF THE CHILD  
PERVERSE? \*

Is the human instinct perverted beforehand? Is man wicked from his birth? Can the infant that I receive in my arms, as it springs from its mother's breast, be already one of the damned?

To this atrocious question, which pains one even to write it, the middle ages, without any pity or hesitation, answer, Yes.

What! this creature that seems so innocent, so disarmed, to whom all nature is attached, whom the she-wolf or the lioness would come and suckle, in default of a mother,—has only the instinct of evil, the inspiration of that which ruined Adam? What! it would belong to the devil, if we did not hasten to exorcise it? Nay, afterwards, if it die in its nurse's arms, it is judged, it is in danger of damnation, it may be cast to the black *beasts* of hell! “Deliver not to the beasts,” says the church, “the souls that testify of thee?” And how should this one testify? It cannot yet understand or speak.

Whilst visiting, in the month of August, 1843, a few cemeteries in the neighbourhood of Lucerne, I found there a very simple and painful expression of religious terrors. At the foot of every tomb was (according to ancient use) a holy-water vase (*bénitier*), to guard the deceased night and day, and prevent the *beasts* of hell from coming to snatch away the body, from tormenting or worrying it, or making a vampire of it.

As for the soul, alas! they had no means of defending it: this cruel fear was expressed in several inscriptions. I remained a long time before this one, without being able to tear myself away: “*I am a child two years old; what a terrible thing is it for such an infant to go to judgment, and appear already before the face of God.*” I burst into tears; I had caught a glimpse of the abyss of maternal despair!

The poorer quarters of our large towns, those vast factories of death, where women, miserably fruitful, bring forth only to weep, give us some idea, though a very imperfect one, of the perpetual

\* This chapter, which inattentive minds will think foreign to the subject, is its very basis. See p. 117.

mourning of the mother in the middle ages. The latter, incessantly fruitful through barbarous improvidence, produced, without intermission or truce, in tears and desolation, children doomed to death, and *dammèd*.

Horrible age ! a world of cruel illusions, over which an infernal irony seems to hover ! Man, the sport of his fluctuating, divine, and diabolical dream ! Woman, the sport of man, ever a mother, ever in mourning ! The child, who plays, alas ! for a day, at the sad game of life, smiles, weeps, and disappears—unfortunate little shadows that come by millions and hundreds of millions, and last only in the memory of a mother ! The despair of the latter shows itself especially in one thing : she easily abandons herself to sin and damnation ; she willingly revenges herself for man's brutality ; she deceives him, weeps, laughs !\* She ruins herself ;—what matter, provided she rejoin her child ?

The child that survived was scarcely more happy ; the middle ages were a terrible pedagogue for him ; they proposed to him the most complicated symbol that was ever taught, the most inaccessible to the simple. This subtle lesson which the Roman empire, in its highest wisdom, had much trouble to understand, this child of the Barbarians, the son of the rustic serf, lost in the woods, must retain and comprehend. He retains, and repeats it ; but as for understanding that thorny, Byzantine, and scholastic formula, that is more than the rod, blows, and cuffs will ever obtain from him.

The church, democratical by her principle of election, was eminently aristocratical by the difficulty of her instruction, and the very small number of men who could really attain it. She damned the natural instinct as perverse and spoilt beforehand, and made science metaphysics, and a most abstract formula, the condition of salvation.†

\* The frailty of woman is the subject proper of the middle ages ; other ages were little acquainted with it. This eternal topic of jests, these *merry* stories, can only afflict him who knows and understands. They prove but too plainly the prodigious *ennui* of that age, the vacuity of souls without any alimènt appropriate to their weakness, a moral prostration, the despair of virtue, and the abandonment of one's self and one's salvation.

† If it be answered, that uncultivated minds (which, for that period, means everybody, or nearly so) were exempted from understanding, it must be confessed that so terrible an enigma imposed, upon pain of damnation, the general abandonment of the human intellect into the hands of a few learned men who thought they knew the meaning. Mark also the result. The enigmas once laid down, and once surrounded with its commentaries, no less obscure, mankind is silent, and remains gaping, mute, and unfruitful. Throughout an immense period, as long as the entire brilliant period of antiquity, from the fifth to the eleventh century, he scarcely ventures a few prayers, a few childish legends, and, moreover, that movement is arrested by the express prohibition of the Carlovingian councils.

All the mysteries of the religions of Asia, all the subtleties of the Western schools—in one word, all the difficulties that the world contains from east to west—all that, compressed and heaped together into one formula! “Well, yes,” says the church, “it is the whole world in one immense cup. Drink it in the name of love!” and she brings here, in support of the doctrine, history, affecting legends; it is the honey on the edge of the vase.

“Whatever it contain, I will drink, if truly love is at the bottom:” such was the answer of the human race. That was the real difficulty, the objection; and it is love that made it, not hatred, or human pride, as they are ever repeating.

The middle ages had promised love, and had not given it. They had said, “Love! love!”\* but they had consecrated a hateful civil order, inequality in the law, in the state, and in the family. Their too subtle instruction, accessible to so few, had brought a new kind of inequality into the world. They had put salvation at a price rarely attained, at the price of an abstruse science, and they had thus overborne, with all the metaphysical science in the world, the simple and the child. The latter, who had been so happy in antiquity, received its hell in the middle ages.

It required ages for reason to struggle into light, for the child to re-appear, as he is, an *innocent*. One grieved to believe that man was an hereditarily perverse being.† It became difficult to maintain

\* Not only had they said so, but sincerely wished it. ‘This touching aspiring towards love is what constitutes the genius of the middle ages, and insures them our eternal sympathy. I do not efface one word of what I have said of them in the second volume of my “History of France.” Only, there I gave their transport, their ideal, to-day, in a book of practical interest, I can only give the real, the results. I have expressed (at the end of the same volume, printed in 1833) the impotency of this system, and the hope that it may escape its ruin, and succeed in transforming itself. How very far it is already from us, we saw on the 11th of May, 1844, when a magistrate in the Chambre, a sincere and courageous orthodox Christian, deduced a penal theory from the Original Sin and the Fall: even the Catholics recoiled from it.

† The embarrassment of theology proceeded especially from the progress of jurisprudence. As long as jurisprudence maintained, in all their severity, the laws of *lèse-Majesté*, which, by confiscation, &c., extended the penalty to the heir, theology could defend its law of divine high treason, which damned the children for the sin of the father. But, when law became more merciful, it was more and more difficult to maintain in theology, the world of love and grace,—this horrible doctrine of the *inheritance of sin*, abandoned by human law. The scholastics, St. Bonaventura, Innocent III., and St. Thomas, found no other way of palliating it than to exempt children from everlasting fire, *leaving them in other respects in damnation*. Bossuet has very well established (against Sfondrata), that this doctrine is not particular to the Jansenists, as they pretended to believe, but was even that of the Church, of the Fathers



in its barbarity the principle which damned the non-Christian sages, the simple and the ignorant, and children who had died without baptism. They invented for children the palliative of the Limbo, a little somewhat milder hell, where they were always to hover about, weeping, far from their mothers.

Insufficient remedies; the heart was not satisfied. With the *Renaissance* burst forth the re-action of love, in opposition to the cruelty of their musty doctrines. It came, in the name of justice, to save the innocents, condemned in the system which had styled itself one of love and grace. But that system, which was based entirely upon the two ideas of the damnation of all by one, and the salvation of all by one, could not renounce the former without shaking the stability of the latter.

Mothers began again to believe in the salvation of their children. Thenceforth they ever say, without inquiring whether they be perfectly orthodox: "They must be angels on high, as they were when alive on earth."

The heart has prevailed, mercy has prevailed. Humanity is retiring farther and farther from ancient injustice. It is now sailing in an opposite direction to the old world. Whither is it steering? Towards a world (we can well foresee it) that will no more condemn innocence, and where wisdom may truly say in truth, "Let the simple and the little ones come unto me."

(except Gregory of Nazianzus). of the Councils, and of the Popes: indeed, if they exempt children from damnation, they give up Original Sin, and the *inheritance of crime*, which is the basis of the whole system.

## CHAPTER VI.

## DIGRESSION — INSTINCT OF ANIMALS — PROTESTATION IN THEIR FAVOUR.

HOWEVER hurried I may be in this review of the simple, the humble children of instinct, my heart stops me, and forces me to say one word about the superlatively simple, the most innocent, perhaps the most unfortunate, I mean, animals.

I just now made the remark that every child was born noble. Naturalists have remarked likewise that the young animal, more intelligent at its birth, seemed then approaching near to the child. As it grows up, it becomes brutish, and sinks into the beast. It seems that its poor soul succumbs under the weight of the body, and submits to the fascination of nature, the magic of the potent Circe. Man then turns away, and will no longer recognise a soul in it. The child alone, by an instinct of the heart, still feels there is a person in that despised being; he speaks to it, and questions it; and the animal, for its part, listens too, and loves the child.

The animal! Dark mystery! An immense world of musings and dumb sorrows! But, in default of language, signs too visible express those sufferings. All nature protests against the barbarity of man, who disavows, debases, and tortures his inferior brother; she accuses him before Him who created them both!

Mark, without prejudice, their gentle musing air, and the attraction which the most advanced among them visibly feel for man; would you not say they are children whose development some civil genius has prevented, and who have not been able to unravel their first infantine dream; perhaps, chastised and humiliated souls, under the curse of some temporary fatality! A sad enchantment, in which the captive being of an imperfect form is dependent on all those who surround it, like a person asleep. But, because he is as if asleep, he has, by way of compensation, access to a sphere of dreams of which we have no idea. We see the bright side of the world, the animal the dark side; and who knows whether the latter be not the most extensive? \*

\* "Let us act to-day, if we will, the proud lords of the creation. But let us not forget our education under the discipline of nature. Plants and animals — these were our first preceptors. All these beings that we direct, then

The East came to this belief, that the animal is a soul either enchanted or lulled to sleep; the middle ages returned to it. Religions and systems have not been able, in the least, to stifle this voice of nature. India, nearer than we to the creation, has much better preserved the tradition of universal brotherhood. She has inscribed it in the beginning and at the end of her two great sacred poems, the "Ramayan" and "Mahabharat," those gigantic pyramids before which all our petty Western productions must stand humble and respectful.

When tired of this disputing West, give yourself, I beseech you, the pleasure of returning to your mother, that majestic antiquity, so noble and so tender. Love, humility, grandeur, you will find all united together, and in a sentiment so simple, so detached from every petty feeling of pride, that there is never any need to speak there of humility.

India was well rewarded for her kindness to nature; with her, genius was a gift of pity. The first Indian poet sees two doves on the wing; and whilst he is admiring their grace and amorous flight, one of them falls pierced with an arrow. He weeps; his groans measured, without his dreaming of it, by the pulsations of his heart, assume a rhythmical movement, and poetry is born. Since that time, the melodious doves, two and two, born again in the songs of man, love and fly throughout the world (Ramayan).

Grateful nature has endowed India with another admirable gift,—fecundity. Surrounded by her with tenderness and respect, nature has multiplied for her, together with the animal creation, the spring of life by which the earth is renewed. There exhaustion is unknown. So many wars, so many disasters and servitudes, have not been able to exhaust the milk of the sacred cow. Streams of milk are ever flowing for that thrice blessed country,—blessed by her own benevolence, her gentle treatment towards the lower animals.

That affecting union, which at first bound man to the humblest offspring of God, has been dissolved by pride. But not with impunity; the earth has rebelled,—she has refused to nourish inhuman races.

guided us better than we should have done ourselves. They guided our young reason by a surer instinct; those little ones that we now despise then gave us counsel. We profited by the contemplation of those irreproachable children of God: they, calm and pure, seemed, in their silent existence, to be keeping the secrets of heaven. Has the tree, which has seen all times—has the bird, that flies over all places, nothing to teach us? Does not the eagle read in the sun, and the owl in darkness? And have those great oxen themselves, so grave under the dark oak, no thought in their long reveries?"—Origines du Droit, p. lxxix.

The world of pride, the Greek and Roman city, had a contempt for nature ; it valued only art, and esteemed only itself. That proud antiquity, that would have nothing but what was noble, succeeded but too well in suppressing all the rest. Whatever seemed low or ignoble disappeared from their eyes ; animals perished as well as slaves. The Roman empire, rid of both, entered upon the majesty of the desert. The earth, ever spending and no longer replenished, became, among so many monuments which covered it, a garden of marble. Cities still remained, but the country was no more ; circuses, triumphal arches, — but no more cottages, no more labourers. Magnificent roads were ever waiting for the traveller, who no longer passed ; sumptuous aqueducts continued to transport rivers to silent cities, but there was no one to quench his thirst.

One man alone, before this desolation, had found in his heart a protestation, a lamentation for all that was becoming extinct. One alone, amid the devastation of civil wars, in which men and animals perished at once, found, in the immensity of his pity, tears for the labouring ox that had fertilised ancient Italy. He consecrated a divine poem to these disappearing races.\*

Tender and profound Virgil ! I, who have been fed by him, as it were, upon his knees, I am happy that this unique glory belongs to him, — the glory of pity and of excellence of heart. That peasant of mantua, with his virgin timidity and long rustic hair, is, however, without his having known it, the true pontiff and augur, between two worlds, two ages half way on the road of history. An Indian in his tenderness for nature, a Christian in his love for man, he, even this simple man, reconstitutes, in his great heart, the grand universal city, from which nothing having life is excluded, — whereas each wishes none to enter there but his own.

Christianity, in spite of its spirit of meekness, did not renew the ancient union. It preserved a Jewish prejudice against nature ; Judea, who knew herself, was afraid to love too much this sister of man ; she fled from her with curses. Christianity, obedient to its fears, kept animal nature at an infinite distance from man, and vilified it. The symbolic animals which accompany the evangelists, the cold *allegories* of the lamb and the dove, did not better the beast. The new benediction did not reach it ; salvation did not come for

\* In another piece — the most highly finished one perhaps — which he consecrates to his dearest friend the consul, the poet Gallus, he does not hesitate to give him, for brethren and comforters, the most humble children of nature, — the innocent animals. After having invited all the rural deities to assuage the pangs of the love-sick poet, "*his sheep also stood around him*" (then, by a charming turn, fearful of wounding the pride of Gallus): "*Nostri nec pœnitent illis ; nec te pœniteat pecoris, divine pœta.*"

the smallest, the most humble of the creation. The God died for Man, and not for them. Having no share in salvation, they remain beyond the Christian law, as Pagans, as impure, and too often suspected of conniving with the principle of evil. Has not Christ in the gospel permitted the demons to take possession of the swine?

Never shall we know the terrors in which the middle ages lived for several centuries, ever in presence of the devil! The vision of the invisible evil one — wicked dream, absurd torture! And thence a strange fantastical life which would make us laugh every instant, did we not feel that it was sad even to tears. Who could then doubt of the devil? I have seen him, says the Emperor Charles. I have seen him, says Gregory VII. The bishops who make the popes, the monks who pass all their lives in prayer, declare he is there behind them, that they feel him, that he does not stir. The poor rustic serf, who sees him under the figure of a beast, sculptured in the church porch, is afraid, on his return, to find him among his cattle. The latter assume, in the evening, quite a fantastic aspect, in the flickering light of the hearth; the bull has a strange mark, the goat an equivocal look, — and what must he think of that cat whose hair, as soon as he touches it, throws out sparks in the dark!

It is the child that allays the fears of man. He fears those animals so little that he makes them his companions. He gives leaves to the ox, mounts upon the goat, and boldly handles the black cat. He does still better, he imitates them, counterfeits their voice — and the family smiles. “Why, indeed, should I be afraid of them? I was wrong. I am in a Christian house, with holy water and holy flowers; he would not dare approach. My beasts are God’s creatures, innocents, children. Why, even the animals in the fields seem by their looks to know God; they live like hermits. This fine stag, for instance, who bears the cross upon his head, who stalks like a living forest through the woods, seems himself a miracle. The hind is as gentle as my cow, and has not even her horns; the hind, in default of a mother, would have suckled my child.” This last sentence, expressed, as every thing then was, in an historical form, ended by being developed into the finest of the legends of the middle ages, — that of Geneviève de Brabant: the family oppressed by man, saved by the animal; the innocent wife saved by the innocent beast of the woods: salvation thus coming from the least, the most humble.

The animals, re-instated, take their places in the rustic family next to the child that loves them, as poor relations figure at the lower end of the table in a noble mansion. They are treated as such on grand days, share the joys and sorrows, wear mourning or wedding

garments (lately still in Brittany). They say nothing, it is true, but they are docile, and listen patiently ; man, like a priest in his own house, preaches to them in the name of the Lord.\*

Thus popular genius, more simple and more profound than sacred scholastics, brought about timidly, but efficiently, the re-establishment of nature's rights. The latter was not ungrateful. Man was rewarded ; those poor beings, that have nothing, gave treasures. The animal, as soon as it was loved, lasted and multiplied : and the earth became fruitful again, and the world, that seemed at an end, grew rich and powerful again, because it had received, like dew, the benediction of mercy.

The family being thus composed, the next question is to make it enter, if possible, entire into the Church. Now comes the difficulty ! They are very willing to receive the animal ; but only to sprinkle it with holy water, exorcise it, as it were, and only at the porch. "Simple man ! leave thy beast behind ; enter alone. The entrance of the Church is the judgment that you see represented upon the doors : the Law sits on the threshold ; Saint Michael stands holding the sword and the scales. How can the animal you bring with you be judged, saved, or damned ? Has that beast a soul ? What is to be done with the souls of brutes ? Shall we open a limbo for them, like that for little children ?"

No matter, our man is obstinate ; he listens respectfully, but he cares not to understand. He has no wish to be saved alone, and without his family. Why should not his ox and his ass get their salvation as well as St. Paulin's dog ? They have certainly worked as well.

"Well ! I will be cunning," says he to himself ; "I will choose Christmas-day, when the Church makes her family festival, the day when God is yet too young to be just. Just or not, we shall all pass ; I, my wife, my child, and my ass. He too ! He was at Bethlehem, and bore our Lord. As a reward, the poor beast ought to have his day. It is not quite sure, moreover, that he is what he seems ; he is at bottom malicious and lazy, just like me ; if I was not also forced to it, I should not work much."

It was a grand spectacle, and one far more touching than laughable, when the beast of the people was, in spite of the commands of bishops and councils, taken with him into the Church. Nature, condemned and cursed, returned victorious under the most humble form that could gain her pardon. She returned with the saints of Paganism, between the Sibyl and Virgil.† They held out to the animal the sword that stopped him under Balaam ; but that sword

\* See the little Sermon to Bees, in my *Origines du Droit*.

† Preserved a long time at Rouen. Ducange, verbo *Festum*.

of the ancient law, being blunted, frightened him no more ; the law was near its end in that day, and was making room for grace. Humbly but assuredly, he was going straight to the manger. There he listened to the service, and, like a baptized Christian, knelt in devotion. Then they sang to him, and for him, partly in the language of the Church and partly in French, that he might understand this comic yet sublime anthem : —

A genoux ! et dis amen !  
 Assez mange d'herbe et de foin.  
 Amen ! encore une fois !  
 Laisse les vicilles choses, et va !

The animal gained little by this reparation.\* The Councils shut him out from the Church. The philosophers, who in pride and hard-heartedness perpetuated the theologians, decided that he had no soul.† He suffers in this world — what matter ? He must expect no recompence in a superior life. Thus there must be then no God for him ; the merciful Father of man is to be for whatever is not human, a cruel tyrant ! To create playthings, but sensible ones, machines, but suffering ones, automaton, who should resemble superior creatures only in the faculty of enduring evil ! May the earth lie heavy on you, hard-hearted men, who conceived this impious idea ; who inflict such a sentence upon so many innocent but suffering creatures !

Our age will have one great glory. It has produced a philosopher with a human heart.‡ He loved the child and the animal. The child, before its birth, had excited interest only as a sketch, a preparation of life ; but he loved it in itself, followed it patiently in its petty, obscure life, and discovered in its changes, the faithful reproduction of animal metamorphoses. Thus, in the bosom of woman, in the true sanctuary of nature, the mystery of universal brotherhood has been discovered. Thanks be to God !

\* Popular genius did more for its *protégé*. Without stopping at the opposition of the church, it created for the animal a legal position, treated it as a person, made it appear in court : and even in the most serious cases, in criminal trials, it figured as a witness, and sometimes as the prisoner. No doubt but this importance attributed to the animal contributed powerfully to its preservation and perpetuation, and, consequently, to the fecundity of the land, which generally depends on the treatment the animal experiences from man. This is, perhaps, the true cause why the middle ages always recovered after so many frightful devastations.

† Bougeaut, the Jesuit, objected that beasts must have a soul, *since they were devils*.

‡ So gloriously continued in the persons of his friend and his son : Serres and Isidore Geoffroy Saint Hilaire. I see with pleasure a youth full of future promise enter upon this scientific path, which is the road of life.

This is the true re-instalment of inferior life. The animal, that serf of serfs, finds himself once more related to the lord of the universe.

Let the latter, then, resume, along with a more merciful sentiment, the grand work of the education of animals, which formerly gained him the dominion of the globe\*, and which he has abandoned for two thousand years, to the great detriment of the earth. Let the people learn that their prosperity depends on their merciful treatment of this poor inferior people. Let science remember that the animal, more closely related to nature, was her augur and interpreter in antiquity. She will find a voice of God in the instinct of these simple among the simple.

This age of machinery, that wants machines everywhere, ought to perceive, one would think, that if it wishes animals to remain as they are, they are most certainly the foremost of all machines; giving, besides such a quantity of positive power, another infinite and inappreciable power, which proceeds (if they will not say from the soul) from a mated life. It would seem that one ought to resume the study and the *de-vestication* of animals. See a fine article on *Domestication*, by M. Isidore Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, in the "Encyclopédie Nouvelle," of Messrs. Leroux and Reynaud.



## CHAPTER VII.

THE INSTINCT OF THE SIMPLE — THE MAN OF GENIUS IS SUPERLATIVELY THE SIMPLE, THE CHILD, AND THE PEOPLE.

I HAVE read in the life of a great doctor of the Church, that, having returned after death to his monastery, he honoured with his apparition, not the most distinguished among his brethren, but the least so, the most simple one poor in spirit. The latter received from him the favour of dying three days after. He bore upon his visage a truly celestial joy. "One might," says the legendary, "apply to him the words of Virgil :

' Infant, know thy mother by her smile ! ' "

It is a remarkable fact, that most men of genius have a particular predilection for children and the simple. The latter, on their side, generally timid in public, dumb in presence of wit, feel completely safe with men of genius. That power which overawes everybody, on the contrary encourages them. They feel that from them they will meet with no derision, but with benevolence and protection. Then they find themselves truly in their natural state ; their tongue is untied, and it may be seen that these people, called simple because they are ignorant of conventional language, are often but so much the more original, especially very imaginative, and endowed with a singular instinct to seize very distant relations.

They compare and connect very willingly, but divide and analyse but little. Not only is every kind of division troublesome to their minds, but it pains them, and seems to them a dismembering. They like not dissecting life, and every thing seems to them to have life. Objects, whatever they be, seem to them organic beings, which they would scruple to alter in the least. They shrink back the moment it is necessary to disturb by analysis any thing that shows the least appearance of vital harmony. This disposition usually implies natural gentleness and goodness of heart : they are called *good people*.

Not only do they not divide, but as soon as they find any thing divided, or partial, they either neglect it, or mentally rejoin it to the whole whence it is separated ; they recompose this whole with a rapidity of imagination which was not to be expected from their natural slowness. They are powerful in putting together in the same

ratio as they are powerless in separating. Or, rather, it seems, on beholding so easy an operation, that it is neither power nor impotency, but a necessary fact, inherent in their existence. In fact, it is in that they exist as *simple*.

A hand appears in the light. The reasoner concludes that doubtless there is a man in the shade, whose hand alone he sees ; from the hand he infers the man. The simple man does not reason, does not infer ; on beholding the hand, he says immediately, " I see a man." And so he does, in fact, with the eyes of the mind.

Here they both agree. But on a thousand occasions, the simple, who, by a part, sees a whole unseen by others, who, by a sign, divines and affirms a yet invisible being, is laughed at, or passes for a madman. To see what appears to the eyes of nobody, is second-sight. To see what seems to be coming or about to be, is prophecy. Two things which cause the wonder of the crowd, and the derision of philosophers, and which are generally a natural gift of simplicity.

This gift, rare among civilised men, is, as we know, very common among simple nations, be they savages or barbarians.

The simple sympathise with life, and have for a reward this magnificent gift, that the least sign suffices for them to see it and foresee it.

That is their secret relationship with the man of genius. They often attain without effort, by mere simplicity, what he obtains by the power of simplification within him ; so that the first of mankind, and they who seem the last, meet very well and understand one another. Their mutual understanding is owing to one thing, their common sympathy for nature, for life, which causes them to delight only in the living unity.

If you study seriously in his life and his works that mystery of nature, called the man of genius, you will generally find it is he who all the while he was acquiring the gifts of the critic, preserved the gifts of the simple.\*

These two men, otherwise opposed, are harmonised in him. At the moment when his inward criticism seems to have urged him to infinite division, his simplicity maintains present unity. It ever preserves for him the sentiment of life, and keeps it indivisible. But though genius has both these powers within it, its love of living harmony, its tender regard for life, are still so strong, that it would sacrifice study and science itself, if the latter could only be obtained

\* Genius has, I know, a thousand forms. The one I give here is certainly the most original, the most fruitful, that which the most frequently characterises great inventors. La Fontaine and Corneille, Newton and Lagrange, Ampère and Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, were at the same time the most simple and the most subtle of men.

by means of dissection. Of the two men within him, it would leave him who divides ; the simple one would remain, with his unknowing power of divination and prophecy.

This is a mystery of the heart. If genius, among all the divisions, the fictitious subdivisions of science, ever preserves within a *simple* faculty, that never consents to absolute division, that ever tends towards unity, that fears to destroy it in the minutest existence, it is because the property of genius is the love of life itself, the love that causes it to be preserved, and the love that produces it.

The crowd, who see all that confusedly and from the outside, without being able to account for it, occasionally find this great man a good man and a simpleton. They are astonished at the contrast ; but there is no contrast ; it is simplicity and goodness, which are the basis of genius, its prime reason ; it is by these he participates in the fecundity of God.

This goodness, which gives the man of genius a regard for minute existences neglected by others, which sometimes arrests him suddenly, that he may not destroy a blade of grass, is the amusement of the crowd. The spirit of simplicity which never allows his mind to be shackled by divisions, which by a part, a sign, makes him see or foresee a whole being, a system that nobody yet divines — this wonderful faculty is precisely that which excites the astonishment, almost the scandal, of the vulgar. It raises him above the world, as it were, sets him above opinion, time, and place ; him, who alone ought to leave a vestige of himself.

- The trace he will leave is not the work of genius alone ; but that very life of simplicity, childhood, goodness, and holiness, to which all ages will come and seek a sort of moral refreshment. This or that discovery of his will become, perhaps, less useful in the progress of the human race ; but his life, which in his lifetime seemed his weak side, in which envy found satisfaction, will remain the treasure of the world, and the eternal festival of the heart.

Assuredly the people are quite right to call this man simple. He is the superlatively simple, the child among children, the people more than the people themselves.

To explain. The simple man has unintelligent parts, confused and undecided views, wherein he wavers, hunts about, follows several roads at once, and quits the character of a simple man. The simplicity of genius, which is true simplicity, has never any of these oblique views ; it applies itself to objects, like a powerful light, that needs no by-path, because it pierces and traverses the whole.

Genius has the gift of childhood, such as the child never has.

This gift, as we have said, is the vague, powerful instinct which reflection soon specifies and narrows, so that the child early becomes

a questioner, a caviller, and brimful of objections. Genius preserves the native instinct in its grandeur, in its strong impulse, together with a divine grace, which unfortunately the child loses,—young and lively hope.

"*The people*, in the highest ideal sense, are difficult to be found among the people. Whether I observe them here or there, they are not *the people*, but a certain class, some partial form or other of the people, changed, and ephemeral. In their reality, in their highest power, they are solely in the man of genius; in him resides the great soul. All the world is surprised to see the inert masses vibrate at his slightest word, the roar of the ocean hushed at his voice, the popular tide prostrate at his feet. Why wonder? That voice is the people's; mute in themselves, they speak in that man, and God with him. Then it is we may truly say, "*Vox populi, vox Dei.*"

Is he a God, or is he a man? Is it necessary to seek for mystic names, inspiration, or revelation, for the instinct of genius? It is the tendency of the vulgar; they must make gods for themselves. "Instinct? Nature? Fie!" say they. "Were it but instinct, we should not be carried away by it. It is the inspiration from above; it is the well-beloved of God, a God, a new Messiah!" Rather than admire a man, or admit the superiority of their fellow creature, they will make him inspired by God, or God if necessary; every one says to himself that it required nothing less than a supernatural ray to dazzle him to such a degree. So, they set him beyond nature, observation, and science, him who was true nature, him whom, of all others, science ought to observe; they exclude from humanity him who alone was *man*. This man of men is by an imprudent adoration sent back to heaven, banished from the land of the living, where he had taken root. Ah! pray leave him, who is the essence of life on earth, still among us! Let him remain man; let him remain the people. Do not separate him from the children, the poor, the simple, where his heart is, to exile him upon an altar. Let him be enveloped in the crowd, whose spirit he is; let him plunge into full, fertile life, live with us, and suffer with us; in participating in our sufferings and weaknesses, he will draw forth that strength which God has concealed within, and which will be his very genius.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE BIRTH OF GENIUS, A TYPE OF THE BIRTH OF MAN.

IF perfection is not here below, that which approaches it the nearest is, according to all appearance, the harmonious and fruitful man who manifests his inward excellence by a superabundance of love and strength ; who proves it, not only by transitory actions, but by immortal works, wherein his great soul will remain in company with all mankind. This superabundance of gifts, this fecundity, this durable creation, is apparently the token that we ought there to find the plenitude of nature and the model of art. Social art, the most complicated of all, ought to see well whether this master-piece of God, wherein rich diversity is harmonised in fruitful unity, could not throw some light upon the object of its search.

Permit me, then, to dwell upon the character of genius, to penetrate its inward harmony, and to consider the wise economy and good policy of this great moral city, which stands in the heart of man.

Genius, the inventive and generating power, supposes, as we have said, that the same man is endowed with two powers : that he unites in himself, what may be called, the two sexes of the mind, — the instinct of the simple, and the reflection of the wise. He is, in a manner, man and woman, child and man, barbarous and civilised, people and aristocracy.

This duality, which astonishes, and causes the vulgar to regard it often as a whimsical phenomenon, a monstrosity, is what constitutes in him in the highest degree, the normal and legitimate character of man. To say the truth, he alone is man, and there is none other. The simple man is half a man, and the critic is half a man ; they do not produce ; still less do those of mediocrity, whom we might call *neuter*, having neither sex. He who is alone complete, can also alone engender ; he is commissioned to carry on the divine creation. All others are sterile, save at those moments when by means of love they reconstitute for themselves a sort of double unity ; their natural aptitude, transmitted by generation, remains powerless till they meet the complete man, who alone possesses fecundity.

It is not that the instinctive, the inspiring spark, has been wanting in all those men ; but, in them, reflection soon congeals or ob-

scures it. The privilege of genius is, that inspiration acts in it before reflection ; its flame burns with a full light. In other men, every thing emerges slowly and in succession : the interval sterilises them. Genius, on the other hand, fills up the interval, joins both ends, and suppresses time—it is a lightning flash of eternity.

Instinct, rapid to this degree, touches upon the act, and becomes the act itself ; the idea thus concentrated, quickens and engenders.

Many a one, now vulgar, had also received, in the bud, this fruitful duality of two persons, the simple man and the critic ; but his natural malignity early destroyed the harmony : at his first step in science came pride and subtlety ; the critic destroyed the simple man. Reflection, vainly proud of her precocious manhood, despised instinct as a feeble child ; vain and aristocratic, she mingled as soon as she could in the glittering crowd of sophists, and, wincing under their sneers, denied the humble relationship, which connected her too closely with the people. She has gone beyond them : fearful of their derision, she set about the impious task of deriding her brother. Well ! she will remain alone ; alone she does not produce a man. That man is impotent.

Genius knows nothing of this sad policy. He has no mind to stifle his inward flame, for fear of the laughter of the world ; he does not even hear it. In him reflection is neither bitter nor ironical : she treats kindly the *infancy* of instinct. This instinctive half needs to be spared by the other : feeble and vague, it is subject to tumultuous emotions ; because, being full of aspiration, blinded by love, it rushes forth to meet the light. Reflection knows well that, if she is superior, by already possessing light, she is inferior to instinct, as prolific heat, as a living concentration. The question between them is of one age, rather than of dignity. Every thing begins under the form of instinct. The reflection of to-day was instinct yesterday. Which is worth most ? Who can say ? The young and the weak has, perhaps, the advantage.

The fecundity of genius, let us repeat it, depends, doubtless, in a great measure, on the goodness, meekness, and simplicity of heart, with which he welcomes the feeble endeavours of instinct. He welcomes them within himself, in his inner world, and quite as much in the external world, in man and in nature. He everywhere sympathises with the simple, and his easy indulgence is incessantly evoking from infant purgatory new germs of thought.

\* They fly to him of their own accord. Innumerable things, which had yet no form, which were floating about alone and abandoned, come fearlessly towards him. And he, keen-sighted man, will not inquire whether they are shapeless or coarse ; he welcomes them, smiles at them, delights in their vivacity, absolves and encourages

them. From this clemency results this singular advantage to him : every thing comes to enrich, succour, and strengthen him. For all others, the world is a sandy desert, where they seek and do not find.

How could love fail to come into that soul, so full and rich in the living gifts of nature ? Some beloved object presents itself. Whence does it come ? One cannot say. It is beloved, that suffices. It will grow and live in him, as he also lives in nature, welcoming all that comes, feeding on every thing, increasing and adorning itself, becoming the flower of genius, as genius is the flower of the world.

Sublime type of adoption ! that living speck which just now appeared still obscure, hatched under the paternal eye, gradually assumes its functions, its vivacity, and shines with splendour, — it is some grand invention, a work of art, a poem. I admire this fine creation in its result ; but how I should have wished to follow it in its birth \*, in the tender incubation under which its life, its heat, began !

You, mighty men, in whom God accomplishes these grand things, deign to teach us yourselves ; what was the sacred moment, when Invention, when the work of Art, flashed forth for the first time ! What were the first words in your soul with that new being ! what dialogue took place within you between Old Wisdom and Young Creation ! the kind welcome offered ! How the former encouraged the latter, still rude and rough, formed it without changing it ; and, far from restraining its liberty, used every effort that it might become free, and be truly herself.

Ah ! if you revealed that, you would have enlightened not only art, but moral art also, the art of education and policy. If we knew the culture that genius gives to the well-beloved of his thought, how they live together ; by what address and gentleness, without injuring its originality, he encourages it to produce itself according to its nature, we should have at once the rule of art, and the model of education and civil initiation. †

\* How much it is to be regretted that men of genius efface the successive traces of their own creation ! They seldom keep the series of the sketches which have prepared its way. You may find something of this, with much trouble, and incomplete, in the progressive series of the pictures of a few great painters, who incessantly painted their thoughts, and fixed every moment of them by immortal works. It is not impossible to follow thus the birth of an idea in Raphael, Titian, Rubens, and Rembrandt. To speak only of the latter, his " Good Samaritan," " Christ at Emmaus," " Lazarus," and lastly, " Christ consoling the People," indicate the successive degrees by which the great artist, touched with the new spectacle of profound modern miseries, hatched and engendered his idea. In the last expression that he gives it, and which is so strong and so popular, the work and the workman have attained an unheard of degree of tenderness.

† This is not a simple comparison, like that given by Plato, in book iv. of his Republic. No, it is the thing itself, taken in itself, in its inmost depths, its

Goodness of God ! it is there we must behold you ! ' It is in that superior soul in which wisdom and instinct are so well harmonised, that we must seek the type for every social work. The soul of the man of genius, that soul evidently divine, since it creates like God, is the inward City according to which we are to model the outward one, that it may be divine also.

This man is harmonious and productive, when the two persons who are in him, the simple and the reflecting, understand and aid each other.

Well ! society will be in the highest degree harmonious and productive, if the educated and reflecting classes, welcoming and adopting the men of instinct and action, receive heat from them, and lend light to them.\*

"What a difference !" people will say. "Do you not see that in the soul of a single man, the inward City is ever composed of one and the same ? between two persons so nearly related acquaintance is easy. But in the political city, how many opposite discordant elements ! what varied resistance ! The data are here infinitely more complex ; nay, one of the objects compared is almost the opposite of the other : in one I see only peace ; in the other, only war."

Would to Heaven the objection was reasonable, that I might accept it ! Would to Heaven that discord was only in the outward city, and that in the inward city, in the apparent unity of the individual, there was truly peace ! I feel rather quite the contrary. The general battle of the world is far less discordant than the one I bear within me, the struggle of myself with myself, the combat of the *homo duplex*.

birth and its nature. In proportion as we accustom ourselves to consider the social world in the moral world, we shall see that the latter is the origin, the mother, the womb of the other, or rather that they form but one.

The struggle of the soul with the soul — the progress and the education which result from it — the treaties which its inward powers make among themselves — the love that she has for herself — the marriages and adoptions effected in this narrow and varied enclosure, — will reveal to philosophy the secret of policy, education, and social initiation. Let the artist exalt his work, man the infant of his choice, and the city the still infant classes ; — these three things are analogous ; at least, by the progress of science and love, they will become so more and more.

This science remains to be created. Philosophy, which for ages has confined itself to the same ideas, has not yet reached it. The mystics, who have so scrutinised the human soul, grew blind in endeavouring to find God there ; who no doubt is there, but who maybe distinguished much better when he is seen in his image that he deposited there, the divine and human City.

\* Extend this to the great society of the human race. Some nations are relatively in the instinctive state, others in the state of reflection. When they come in contact, cultivated nations ought, in the name of humanity, and of their own interest, to make for themselves an art, a language, to come to a friendly understanding with those that have only the barbarous instinct.



This warfare is visible in every man. If there is a truce and pacification in the man of genius, that proceeds from a grand mystery, the inward sacrifices which his opposite powers make to one another. The basis of art, like that of society—do not forget it—is sacrifice.

This struggle is worthily rewarded. Work, which one would think inert and passive, modifies its workman. It morally improves him; thus rewarding the benevolence with which the great artist cherished it, when it was young, weak, and as yet without form. He made it, but it makes him; it makes him in proportion as it increases, very great and very good. If the whole world, with its miseries, necessities, and hostile fatalities, did not oppress him, we should see that there is no man of genius, who, in excellence of heart, is not a hero.

All these inward trials, which the world knows not, preserve genius from every paltry feeling of pride. If he repels, in the name of his work, the stupid laughter of the vulgar, it is on account of his work, and not for his own sake. He remains in his inner man heroically meek, ever a child, the people, simple. Whatever be his great achievement, he is on the side of the little ones. He lets the crowd of vain and subtle men go on wandering in the void, rejoicing in mockery, sophisms, and negations. Let them triumph and run, as much as they please, in the ways of the world. He, for his part, remains calm there, whither all the simple ones will come, at the steps of the throne of the Father.

And is it through him that they will come? What support, or what other protector have they? He is the common inheritance of this disinherited people, their glorious indemnification. He is the voice of these mutes, the power of these powerless souls, the tardy accomplishment of all their aspirations. In him, finally, they are glorified, and by him they are saved. He drags, he hurries them all on, in the long chain of classes and kinds into which they are divided: women, children, the ignorant, the poor in intellect, and, with them, our humble fellow-workmen, who have possessed but the pure instinct; and, last of all, the infinite tribes of inferior life, as far as instinct extends.

They all claim relationship with the simple one, at the gate of the City, into which they are all to enter sooner or later. "What do you want here? Who are you, poor simple ones?"

"The younger brothers of the eldest born of God."

## CHAPTER IX.

## REVIEW OF THE SECOND PART—INTRODUCTION TO THE THIRD.

I HAVE been far, very far, perhaps, hurried away by the enthusiasm of my heart.

I wished to characterise the popular instinct, and show there the fountain of life in which the educated classes ought, in the present day, to seek to become young again ; I wanted to prove to these classes, born yesterday, yet already worn out, that they have need to draw nearer to the people whence they have sprung.

These people, disfigured by their misfortunes, and adulterated by their very progress, I have, in order to find out their genius, been obliged to study especially in their purest element, the people, among children and the simple. There it is that God preserves for us the source of the living instinct, the treasure of eternal youth.

But it has come to pass, that these simple ones, these children whom I summoned into my book to bear witness for the people, have implored for themselves : and I have listened to them ; I have vindicated, as I could, the simple from the contempt of the world. I have demanded for the child, why the cruelty of the middle ages was still practised against him.

What ! you have rejected, in belief and in life, the cruel fatalism which supposed man to be perverted at his birth for a crime he had not committed ; and when the question is about the child, you set out from this idea ; you chastise the innocent ; you deduce, from an hypothesis which is daily more and more given up, an education of punishments. You stifle, you gag the child of revelation ; this Joseph, or this Daniel, who alone would tell you your enigma and your forgotten dream.

If you maintain that the instinct of man is bad, spoilt beforehand ; that man is worthy only inasmuch as he is chastised, corrected, and metamorphosed by science or school divinity, *you have condemned the people*, both the people among children, and the people who are still children, whether they be called savages or barbarians.

This prejudice has been fatal for all the poor sons of instinct. It has made the cultivated classes disdainful and malevolent towards the uncultivated classes. It has inflicted upon children the hell of our education. It has sanctioned against infant nations a thousand

nonsensical fables, which have contributed not a little to encourage our self-called Christians in the extermination of these people.

My book wished, moreover, to shroud these nations, whether savages or barbarians, and shelter the few that remain. Presently, it will be too late; the work of extermination is going on rapidly. In less than half a century, how many nations have I seen disappear! Where are now our allies, the Highlanders of Scotland? An English bailiff has driven away the people of Fingal and Robert Bruce. Where are our other friends, the Indians of North America, to whom our old France had so kindly stretched forth her hand? Alas! I have just seen the last of them, whom they were showing about at fairs. The American-English traders and Puritans, in their cruel unintelligence, have just now driven back, famished, and annihilated those heroic races, who leave for ever an empty place upon the globe, and a regret to mankind.

In the face of these devastations, together with that in the north of India, that of Caucasus, and that of Libanus, may France perceive in time that our interminable war in Africa comes especially from our being ignorant of the genius of those nations! we remain ever at a distance, without doing any thing to dispel the mutual ignorance, and the misunderstandings which it occasions. They avowed the other day that they were fighting against us only because they believed us the enemies of their religion, which is the Unity of God; they were ignorant that France, and almost all Europe, had cast off the yoke of idolatrous belief, which obscured the Unity during the middle ages. 'Bonaparte told it them at Cairo; who will repeat it now?

The mist will be dispelled one day or other between each shore, and the nations will know each other. Africa, whose races so closely resemble those of our south — Africa, whom I occasionally recognise in my most distinguished friends of the Pyrenees and of Provence, will do France a great service; she will explain many things in her which are despised and misunderstood. We shall then better comprehend the rough popular vigour of our mountaineers, and the inhabitants of our least adulterated provinces. Many an incident of manners, as I have said, which is found rude and clownish, is, in reality, barbarous, and united our people to those doubtless barbarous, but by no means vulgar, populations.

Barbarians, savages, children, even people (for the most part) have all of them this common misery, that their instinct is misunderstood, and they themselves know not how to make us comprehend it. They are like mutes; they suffer and become extinct in silence. And we are nothing, we scarcely know it. The man of Africa starves upon his devastated Silo, he dies, and without complaint. The man of

Europe works himself to death, ends in an hospital, without any body knowing it. The child, even the rich child, languishes and cannot complain ; nobody will listen to him ; the middle ages, though ended for us, continue for him in their barbarity.

A strange sight ! on one hand, existences full of young and powerful life. But those beings are as if still enchanted ; they cannot well make known their thoughts and their sufferings. On the other hand, behold others who have collected together all the instruments that humanity has ever forged to analyse and express thought, languages, classifications, logic, and rhetoric, but life is feeble in them. They would require those mutes, whom God filled so abundantly with his vigour, to give them one single drop. Who would not offer up prayers for that great people, who, from low and obscure regions, aspires and ascends, groping in the dark, without having even a voice to groan ? But their silence speaks.

They say that Cæsar, when coasting along the shores of Africa, fell asleep and had a dream ; he saw as it were a vast army, weeping and stretching their hands towards him. On awaking, he wrote down upon his tablets—Corinth and Carthage ; and he rebuilt those cities.

I am not Cæsar, but how often have I dreamed Cæsar's dream ! I saw them weeping, I understood their tears, — “ *Urbem orant :*” They want their city ! They ask her to receive and protect them. And I, a poor solitary dreamer, what could I give to that great dumb nation ? All I had, — my voice. May it be their first entrance into the city of right, from which they have been hitherto excluded !

I have made those speak in this book, who as yet do not even know whether they have a right to the world. All those who groan or suffer in silence, all that are aspiring and struggling towards life, are my people. They are the people ! Let them all come with me.

Why can I not enlarge the city, so that it may be solid ? It shakes, it crumbles to pieces, as long as it is incomplete, exclusive, and unjust. Its justice is its solidity. If it wants to be but just, it will not even be just. It must be holy and divine, founded by Him who alone can found.

It will be divine, if, instead of jealously shutting its gates, it rally all who are the children of God, the least, the most humble (woe unto him who will be ashamed of his brethren !). Let all, without distinction of class or classification, weak or strong, simple or wise, bring here their wisdom or their instinct. Those impotent, those incapable *miserabiles personæ*, who can do nothing for themselves, can do much for us. They have in them a mystery of unknown power, a hidden fecundity, living fountains in the depths of their nature. The City, in calling them, calls life, which can alone renew it.

Then, may man have here with man, and man with nature, after this long divorce, a happy reconciliation ! may every species of pride cease, and may the City of protection extend from heaven to the lowest abyss, vast as the bosom of God !

For my part, I protest, that if there remains any one behind whom it still rejects and does not shelter with its right, I will not enter, but remain on the threshold.

## PART III.

## ENFRANCHISEMENT BY LOVE.

## OUR NATIVE COUNTRY.

## CHAPTER I.

## FRIENDSHIP.

It is a grand glory for our old *communes* of France to have been the first to have found the true name of our native land. In their simplicity, full of good sense and profound feeling, they called it *friendship*.\*

Our country is, indeed, the great friendship which contains all the others. I love France, because she is France, and also because she is the country of those whom I love and have loved.

Our country, the great friendship, in which all our attachments centre, is at first revealed to us by them; then, in her turn, she generalises, extends, and ennobles them. The friend becomes a whole people. Our individual friendships are like the first steps in that great initiation, stations through which the soul passes, and mounts by degrees, to know and love herself in that better, more disinterested, and more exalted soul, which is called *Patria*.

I say *disinterested*, because wherever it is strong it causes us to love one another, in spite of the clashing of interests, difference of conditions, and inequality. Poor and rich, great and small, we are all exalted by it above the petty feelings of envy. It is truly *la grande amitié*, because it renders us heroic. They who are united in it, are firmly united; their attachment will last as long as the country. Nay, it is nowhere more indestructible than in their immortal souls. Though it had ended in the world and in history, and become entombed in the bosom of the globe, it would survive as *friendship*.

\* The native land (*la patrie*) was then only in the *commune*. They said the *Amitié* of Lille, the *Amitié* of Aire, &c. See Michelet's "Histoire de France," v. 315.

It would seem, from the language of our philosophers, that man is such an unsociable being, that it would require much trouble, and all the efforts of art and meditation, to invent the ingenious machine that should bring man and man together. But, for my part, I perceive, at a mere glance, that even from his very birth he is a sociable being. Before he has his eyes open, he loves society; he weeps as soon as ever he is left alone. How can we be surprised at this? On the day we call his first day, he quits a society, already become very old, and so agreeable! He began by it; and when nine months old, he must forsake it, enter solitude, and seek, groping, whether he can find again a shadow of the dear union he had, but which he has lost.

He loves his nurse and his mother, and but little distinguishes them from himself. But what is his delight, when, for the first time, he sees *another*, a child of his own age, who is himself, yet not himself! Scarcely will he know any thing like that moment again in the most lively transports of love. His family, his nurse, even his mother, for some time, all give way before the *comrade*—he has made him forget every thing.

It is there we must see how little inequality, that stumbling-block of politicians, embarrasses nature. She amuses herself, on the contrary, in all the relations of the heart, to sport with the differences, the inequalities, which would seem likely to create insurmountable obstacles to union. Woman, for instance, loves man just because he is stronger. The child loves his friend, often because he is superior. Inequality pleases them as an opportunity for devotedness, as emulation, as a hope of equality. The dearest wish of love is to make one's self an equal; its fear is to remain superior, to preserve an advantage that the other has not.

It is the singular character of the beautiful friendships of childhood, that inequality powerfully promotes them. It must exist, to give rise to aspiration, exchange, and reciprocity. Observe those children: what makes their friendship delightful to them is, in the analogy of character and habit, an inequality of mind and culture; the weaker follows the strong, without either servility or envy; he listens to him with rapture, and follows him with joy.

Friendship, whatever be said to the contrary, is, still more than love, a means of progress. Love is, like friendship, doubtless an initiation; but it cannot create any emulation between those whom it unites; lovers differ in sex and in nature; the least advanced of the two cannot change much, in order to resemble the other; the effort of mutual assimilation stops short very early.

The spirit of rivalry, which awakes so early among little girls, begins late among boys. It requires the school, the college, all the

efforts of the master, to rouse those sad passions. Man, in this respect, is born generous, heroic. He must be taught envy, he does not know it of himself.

Ah! how right he is, and how much he gains by it! Love does not calculate, cannot measure. It does not set about calculating a mathematical and rigorous equality, which is never attained. It prefers much more to go beyond it. It creates, for the most part, in opposition to the inequality of nature, an inequality in a totally opposite direction. Between man and woman, for instance, it causes the stronger to wish to be the servant of the weaker. In the progress of the family, when the child is born, the privilege descends to this new comer. The inequality of nature favoured the stronger, the father; the inequality substituted by love favours the weaker, the weakest, and makes the last first.

Such is the beauty of the natural family. And the beauty of the artificial family is, to favour the elected son, the son of the will, dearer than those of nature. The ideal of the City that it ought to pursue, is the adoption of the weak by the strong — inequality for the advantage of the least.

Aristotle says very well in opposition to Plato: — “The City is composed, not of similar, but of dissimilar men.” To which I add: — “Dissimilar, but harmonised by love, made more and more like.” Democracy is love in the City, and initiation.

The initiation of patronage, Roman or feudal, was artificial, and the creature of circumstances.\* It is to the invariable and natural relations of man that we must return.

What are those relations? Do not search very far for them. Only consider man before he is enslaved by passion, crushed by a harsh education, and soured by rivalry. Take him before love, before envy. What do you find in him? Something that is the most natural of all others, the first (ah! and may it also be the last!) — friendship.

I shall soon be an old man. I have, besides mine own age, the weight of two or three thousand years which history has heaped

\* Ancient and feudal patronage will not, must not, return. We feel we are equals. Character, moreover, and originality lost immensely in those relations of strict dependency in which man had ever his eyes fixed on man, became his shadow, his poor copy. The long common table at which the baron sat, near the fire, and which, from the chaplain, the seneschal, and the other vassals, reached as far as the door, where the little kitchen-boy, standing to serve, used to eat, — this table was a school in which imitation descended through all ranks: each studied and copied his neighbour of a superior rank. Their sentiments were not always servile, but their minds were so. This servility of imitation is doubtless one of the causes which retarded the middle ages and kept them so long sterile.



upon me ; so many events, passions, and different reminiscences, in which my life and that of the world enter pell-mell. Well ! among these great innumerable things, these poignant sufferings, one predominates, triumphs, ever young, fresh, and flourishing, — my first friendship.

It was, I remember it well (much better than my thoughts of yesterday), an immense insatiable desire of communications, confidence, and mutual revelations. Neither talk nor paper could suffice. After the longest walks, we escorted, and re-escorted, each other home. What a joy it was, when day returned, to have so much to say ! I started early, in my full strength and liberty, impatient to talk, to resume the conversation, and confide so many things. "What secrets ? What mysteries ?" Why, some historical fact, perhaps, some verse of Virgil, that I had just learned.

How often did I mistake the hour ! At four or five o'clock in the morning I went and knocked, got the door opened, and awoke my friend. How shall I describe, in words, the light and vivid dawn of those mornings in which every thing was brilliant and on the wing ? My existence seemed to fly ; I have still the impression of it, mingling with the morning and the spring ; I felt I lived in the dawn.

An age to be regretted, a true paradise on earth, knowing neither hatred, contempt, nor baseness, when difference of rank is so wholly unknown, when society is still truly human, truly divine.

All that passes quick. Different interests arise, and opposition, and rivalry. And yet something of it would still remain, if education strove to unite men as much as it does to separate them.

If the two classes of children, the poor and the rich, had only been sitting on the benches of the same school, if, connected by friendship, though separated by careers, they saw each other often, they would do more good between them than all the politicians, all the moral lessons in the world. They would preserve, in their disinterested innocent friendship, the sacred bond of the City. The rich man would know life, inequality, and would sigh at it ; all his endeavours would be to share with his poor friend. The poor man would show a great heart, and console him for being rich.

How can we live, without knowing life ? Now, it is only known on one condition : to suffer, work, and be poor ; or else, to make one's self poor in sympathy and heart, and willingly participate in toil and suffering.

What should a rich man know, with all the science in the world ? The very circumstance of his living an easy life causes him to be ignorant of its great and profound realities. Never investigating deeply, or with energy, he runs, and glides along, as on the ice ; he

never penetrates, always remains on the surface ; in that rapid external and superficial existence, he will reach the goal to-morrow, and will depart just as ignorant as he came.

What he lacked was, a solid resting place, on which he might lean with his soul, and dive deep into life and knowledge. In direct opposition to the rich man, the poor man is fixed on an obscure spot, without seeing either sky or land. What he lacks, is the power to rise, breathe, and behold the sky. Riveted to this place by fatality, it would be necessary for him to expand, to generalise his existence, and even his sufferings, live away from this spot where he suffers, and since he has an infinite soul, give it infinite expansion. He is wholly without the means ; the laws will do but little ; it must be friendship. The man of leisure, culture, and reflection, must restore this captive soul to its relations to the world ; change it ? No, but help it to be itself, and remove the obstacle that prevented it from unfolding its wings.

All that would become easy, if each of the two comprehended that he will find his enfranchisement only in the other. The man of science and culture, in these days, the slave of abstractions and formulas, will recover his liberty only by contact with the man of instinct. His youth and his life, that he expects to renew by foreign travel, are there, near him, in that which is social youth, I mean in the people. The latter, on the other hand, for whom ignorance and solitude are like a prison, will extend his horizon, and find his pure air again, if he accept the communication of science ; if, instead of calumniating it through envy, he respect the accumulation of the works of humanity, all the efforts of the men before him.

This assistance, this vigorous and important mutual culture, which they will find in each other, implies, I confess, a genuine magnanimity in both. We summon them to heroism. What appeal more worthy of man ? more natural also, as soon as he returns to himself and recovers, by the grace of God ?

The heroism of the poor man is to sacrifice envy ; it is to be himself sufficiently above his own poverty, not even to wish to inquire whether riches are well or ill acquired. The heroism of the rich is in knowing the rights of the poor man, to love him, and go to him.

“ Heroism ! Why, is not this the most simple duty ? ” Doubtless ; but it is precisely because it is a duty, that the heart keeps shut. Sad infirmity of our nature ; we scarcely love any one, but him to whom we owe nothing, the abandoned, inoffensive being, who holds up no right against us.

The heart must expand on both sides. They have taken democracy by right and duty, by the law, — and they have had but the dead law. Oh, let us take it again by grace !

You say, "What does it signify to us? We will make such such wise laws, so artificially drawn up and arranged, that people will have no need to love." To wish to have wise laws, and to obey them, you must first love.

"How love? Do you not see the insurmountable barriers that interest raises between us? Amid the overwhelming competition in which we are struggling, can we indeed be simple enough to help our rivals, or lend a hand to-day to those who will be our rivals to-morrow?"

Sad confession! What! for a little money, for some miserable place that you will soon lose, you give up the treasure of man, all that is good and great within him,—friendship, your native country, the genuine life of the heart?

Alas, miserable man! so near, yet so far from the Revolution! have you then so soon forgotten that the foremost men in all the world, those young generals, in their awful energy, their furious rushing to an immortal death, which they all disputed with one another,—as desperate rivals of that lovely mistress, Victory, who inflames hearts with the keenest love,—that they felt no jealousy? That glorious letter will remain for ever by which the Conqueror of La Vendée shielded, with all his virtue and his popularity, the man who was already to be dreaded\*, the Conqueror of Arcola, and became security for him. O noble period! and you, great men, true conquerors, to whom every thing must of necessity yield! you have conquered envy as easily as you subdued the world! Noble souls, wherever you be, give us, for our salvation, a breath of your spirit!

\* It is known that Bonaparte had become suspected, while acting as lord and arbiter of Italy, granting or refusing, without consulting any body, armistices which decided peace or war, sending directly funds to the army of the Rhine, without the intervention of the treasury, &c. A report was spread that he was to be arrested in the midst of his army. Hoche, to justify him, wrote to the Minister of Police a letter that was made public. Therein he lays to the charge of the Royalists the reports that were circulated:—"Why is Bonaparte the object of the fury of those gentlemen? Is it because he defeated them in Vendémiaire?—Is it because he disbands the armies of the kings, and furnishes the Republic the means of ending gloriously this war? Ah! brave youth, where is the republican soldier that does not burn to imitate thee? Courage, Bonaparte, lead our victorious armies to Naples, to Vienna; reply to thy personal enemies by humbling kings, by giving a new lustre to our arms, and leave us the care of thy glory."

## CHAPTER II.

## LOVE AND MARRIAGE.

ONE must have very little feeling for the importance of such a subject, to undertake to treat it in a few pages. I shall content myself with making a single observation, essential in the state of our manners.

Indifferent as we are to our country and the world, being neither citizens nor philanthropists, we have barely but one thing by which we pretend to escape from egotism : this is the family tie. To be a good father of a family is a merit to be displayed, and often very profitably.

Well ! we must confess it : — in the upper classes, the family is dangerously ill. If things went on so, family would be an impossibility.

Men have been accused, and not without reason. I myself have spoken elsewhere of their materialism, of their harshness, and the egregious awkwardness with which they lose the ascendancy of the first days.\* However, it must be confessed, the fault is especially with the women, — I mean the mothers. The education that they give, or allow to be given, to their daughters, has made marriage an intolerable burden.

What we see reminds us but too much of the latter ages of the Roman empire. The women having become heiresses, knowing they were rich, and patronising their husbands, rendered the condition of the latter so miserable, that no pecuniary advantage, no legal right could prevail on men to submit to the degrading servitude. They preferred flying to the desert. The Thebaid became inhabited.

The legislator, afraid of depopulation, was obliged to favour and regulate inferior attachments, the only ones accepted by man. It would be, perhaps, the same in these days, if our society, more mercantile than that of the Roman empire, did not speculate upon marriage. Modern man accepts, through cupidity, or necessity, the chances which disgusted the Romans. Unsafe speculation ! The

\* See Michelet's "Priests, Women, and Families." Longman and Co., London, 1845.

young wife knows she brings much ; but she has not in the least learned the value of money, and spends still more. If I considered recent events, and the overthrow of fortunes, I should be inclined to say, " If you want to ruin yourself, marry a rich woman."

I know all the inconveniences in choosing a woman of inferior condition and education. The first is, we *isolate* ourselves, leave our circle, and lose our position in society. Another is, that we do not marry the woman alone, but her family, whose habits are often coarse. This woman we certainly hope to raise, to make her as ourselves and for ourselves ; but it often happens, that with a happy instinct and some docility, she is not capable of being raised. The tardy education that they attempt to give to the vigorous, harder, and less pliant races of the people, has seldom any hold upon them. These inconveniences being acknowledged, I am not less obliged to return to one far more serious inconvenience, — that of the brilliant marriages of the present day. It consists simply in this, that life is there an *impossibility*.

This life consists in commencing every evening, after the day's work, a still more fatiguing task of amusements and pleasures. There is nothing like this in the other countries of Europe, and nothing like this among the people ; the Frenchman of the richer classes is the only man in the world who never reposes. This is, perhaps, the principle reason why our *enrichis*, our *bourgeois*, a class created but yesterday, is already worn out.

In this working age, in which time is of an incalculable value, serious productive men who want results, cannot accept, as a condition of marriage, so enormous an expenditure of life. The night, thus employed in promenading a woman, prematurely destroys the morrow.

Man wants at night his home and repose. He returns full of cares ; he ought to be able to collect his scattered thoughts, and confide his ideas, his plans, his anxieties, the struggles of the day, — to have a home where he may pour out his heart. He finds a woman who has done nothing, who hastens to put forth her strength, ready decked out, and impatient. What means has he of speaking to her ? " Very well, sir ; it is late, we shall not be in time. You will tell me that to-morrow."

Let him go, if he will not confide her to the care of some elderly lady, her friend ; who, too often a depraved malevolent mischief-maker, will find no pleasure greater than to set the young wife against *her tyrant*, compromise her, and launch her into the saddest follies. No, he cannot leave her with such a guide. He will conduct her himself ; he starts off. With what envy he sees the workman return late home ! The latter, it is true, has tired

himself out during the day, but he is about to find repose, a home, a family, and, lastly, slumber, that legitimate happiness which God gives him every evening. His wife expects him; she counts the minutes: the cloth is laid; the mother and child are watching for his coming. If that man be worth any thing, she puts her vanity in him; she admires and reveres him. And how careful she is! I see her, without his perceiving it, keeping the smallest portion of their scanty meal for herself: I see her reserving for the husband, who works harder, the wholesome food that will recruit his strength.

He retires to rest; she puts the children to bed, and then remains up to work till very late at night. Early in the morning, long before he opens his eyes, she is up; every thing is ready, — the warm food he takes, and that which he carries with him. He departs, his heart satisfied, very easy about what he leaves, after kissing his wife and his sleeping children.

I have said it, and will say it again, — happiness is there. She perceives that she is supported by him, and she is happy; he works so much the better, as he knows he works for her. Such is true marriage. Monotonous happiness, some will say. No; the child gives it variety. If the supreme spark were added, if the workman, with a little security and leisure, had but moments of a higher life, if he took woman as a partner in them, and nourished her with his own spirit — It would be too much: we should only pray to heaven for an eternity like the life on earth.

Sad victim of cupidity, you might have had that happiness; but you have sacrificed it. The humble girl that you loved, who loved you, but whom you have forsaken — you may well regret her now! Was it wise (I speak not of honour or humanity) to crush the poor creature, and to crush your own heart, in order to espouse slavery? The money you sought will slip away of itself, — it will not remain in your hands. The children of this union without love, conceived in calculation, will bear their sad origin on their brow; their discordant existence will bear witness to the inward divorce that this marriage contained; they will not have the heart to live.

Was then the difference so great between those two girls? Both, after all, are of the people. The richer one has for her father a workman who has become wealthy. Between the true, unadulterated people, and the *bourgeois* and spurious classes, there is no gulf fixed.

If our *bourgeois* wish to recover from their precocious exhaustion, they will fear less to be united to families that are to-day what they themselves were yesterday. Therein is the strength, the beauty of the future. Our young men marry late, already worn out, and generally espouse a sickly young lady; their children die, or remain

sickly. In the second or third generation, our *bourgeois* will be as puny as our nobles were before the Revolution.\*

And not only are bodily endowments failing, but the *moral* faculty is also declining. How are we to expect a series of works, serious business, or any grand invention, from a man who, having sold himself to a marriage for money, is the slave of a woman, of a family, obliged to parade himself out, and cast his time and his life to the four winds? Imagine what must become of a nation in which the governing classes consume themselves in vain words and empty agitation. For life to be fruitful, there must be tranquillity of mind, and the repose of the heart.

A remarkable fact of our time is, that the women of the people (who are by no means coarse, like the men, and who feel the want of delicacy and distinction), listen to men above them with a confidence that they did not at all possess before. They saw the nobility as an insurmountable barrier to love; but riches do not appear to them a separation of classes†; it is reckoned so little when one loves! Touching confidence of the people, who, in their better, most amiable, and most tender part, thus draw nearer to the upper ranks, and bring with them vigour, beauty, and moral grace! Ah! woe to those who deceive them! If they are inaccessible to remorse, they will at least suffer regret, in the reflection that they have lost what is worth all the treasures of the world, heaven and earth, — to be beloved!

\* As M. de Maistre tells them so well in his “*Considérations sur la Révolution.*”

† An observation of Pierre Leroux, as judicious as it is ingenious and profound. How many things must be added! What a sad side of our morals! I am especially grieved to see the family, — the mother! — urge the youth to treachery. And was it not from that mother that the young deceived girl was to hope for protection? Ought not a pious woman to have bowels of compassion, a heart of infinite goodness for that poor child, who, after all, (what does it matter before God if the proud world murmurs at it?) is become her own? What regard are women to expect from us, if they do not protect one another? They have a mystery in common, which ought to bind them much stronger than men can be bound, the mystery of maternity, which is that of life and death, that which makes them reach the extreme limits of suffering and enjoyment. The participation in this terrible mystery, which men do not know, makes them all equal, all sisters; inequality exists only among men. It is for the mother or the sister to plead with the son or brother for the forsaken girl, and, if marriage be impossible, to shelter her with their protection. In default of these, she whom the man marries, the young virtuous woman, ought to redress the wrongs, cover all with her goodness, open her arms and her heart to the children of the first love. (See in my history the Death of Louis d'Orleans.)

## CHAPTER III.

## ASSOCIATION OF THE FISHERMEN OF NORMANDY.

I HAVE long studied the ancient associations of France. The most charming of all, in my opinion, is that of the fishing-nets, on the coasts of Harfleur and Barfleur. Each of these vast nets (of a hundred and twenty *brasses*, or six hundred and twenty feet long) is divided into several portions, which descend by inheritance to the girls as well as to the boys. The girls, inheriting this right, but not going to fish, nevertheless assist in it by weaving their share of the nets, which they confide to the fishermen. The beautiful and prudent girl of Normandy thus spins her dowry; this net-portion is her fief, which she administers with as much prudence as the wife of William the Conqueror. Being doubly proprietress, by her right and her work, she necessarily must, as such, know the details of the expedition; she appreciates its dangers, interests herself in the choice of the crew, and shares the anxieties of this adventurous life. She often risks upon the bark more than her net. It often happens that he whom she chose at his departure for her fisherman, chooses her for his wife on his return.

A true *country of wisdom*! that Normandy which, in so many things, has served as a model to France and England, appears to me to have formed there a type of association more worthy than any other of being recommended to the attention of future times.

This association is widely different from those cheesemongers' associations of the Jura\*, where they associate after all only for the

\* Often quoted by Fourier. I am a man of history and tradition; therefore I have nothing to say to him who boasts of proceeding by the way of *absolute eccentricity* (*écart absolu*). This book of the people, founded particularly upon the idea of our country, that is to say, on devotedness and sacrifice, has nothing to do with the doctrine of *attraction passionnelle*. I nevertheless seize this opportunity to express my admiration for so many ingenious, profound, and sometimes very practical views, my tender admiration for a misinterpreted genius, whose whole life was occupied with the happiness of mankind. I shall one day speak of him as my heart shall dictate. What a singular contrast does his boast of materialism exhibit to his self-denying, disinterested, and spiritual life! This contrast has very recently re-appeared, for the glory of his disciples. Whilst the friends of virtue and religion, their necessary defenders, those born conservatives of public morality, were enlisting clandestinely in the band of those who play a safe game; the disciples of Fourier, who speak only of interest, money, and enjoyments, have trodden interest under foot, and smitten courageously the Baal of the Exchange. The Baal! No, the Moloch, the idol that was devouring men.



risk and the profit. Each brings his milk to the common cheese, and shares proportionally in the sale. This collective economy requires no moral union; it puts egotism at its ease, and is reconcilable with all the hard-heartedness of individualism. It does not seem to me to deserve the charming name of association.

That of the fisherman of Normandy eminently deserves this title; it is moral and social quite as much as economical. What is it at bottom? A young, serious, honest girl, who, out of her work, her nightly task, and her savings, enters into partnership with young men, stakes her fortune on their bark, before she stakes her heart; she has a right to know, to choose, and to love the skilful, lucky fisherman. *There* is an association truly worthy of that name; far from removing from the natural association of the family, it prepares the tie—and by so doing is profitable to the grand association, that of our native country.

Here my heart fails me, and my pen stands still. I must confess that the country and the family profit but little by it now. Those net-associations will soon exist only in history; they are already succeeded, in many parts of the coast, by that which takes the place of every thing—the bank and usury.

You noble race of Norman mariners! who were the first to discover America, who founded the colonies of Africa, conquered the two Sicilies, and England! shall I then no longer find you, save in the tapestry of Bayeux? Who is not pierced to the heart, in passing from our cliffs to the Downs, from our languishing coasts to those opposite so teeming with life, from the indolence of Cherbourg\* to the burning and terrible activity of Portsmouth? What care I if Havre is filled with American vessels, with a transit-trade which is made by France, without France, and sometimes against her?

Heavy malediction! A truly severe punishment for our insociability! Our economists declare that there is nothing to be done for free association. Our academies efface the word from their lists of competition prizes. This name is that of a crime, punishable by our penal laws. One single association remains lawful, the increasing intimacy between Saint Cloud and Windsor.

Commerce has formed a few societies, but for war, to absorb the minor trades, and destroy small tradespeople. It has done much harm, and gained but little. The large joint-stock companies, created in this expectation, have had little success. They are not advancing; as soon as a new one is formed, the others suffer and decay. Several

\* Maritime indolence; but masons are not wanting there any more than elsewhere. An engineer is engaged with laudable activity in completing the dyke.

have already fallen, and those which subsist have no tendency to increase.

In country places, I see our very ancient agricultural communities of Morvan, Berri, and Picardy, gradually dissolving, and calling on the tribunals to finish the business. They had lasted for ages; several had been prosperous. Those convents of married labourers which united in one bond a score of families, related to each other, under the self-same roof, and under the direction of a chief, whom they elected, possessed however, beyond all doubt, great economical advantages.\*

If from these peasants I pass on to the most cultivated minds, I see scarcely any spirit of association in literature. The men the most naturally brought together by their pursuits and mutual esteem and admiration, nevertheless live apart. The relationship of genius itself is of little use in bringing hearts together. I know here four or five men who are certainly the aristocracy of mankind, and who have no peers or judges but themselves. These men, who will live for ever, would, had they been separated by centuries, have bitterly regretted not having known each other. They are living at the same time, in the same city, next door to, but never see, one another.

In one of my pilgrimages to Lyons, I visited some weavers, and, according to my custom, inquired about their evils and the remedy. I asked them especially whether they could not, whatever might be their difference of opinions, associate for certain material economic purposes. One of them, a man full of good sense and of a high moral character, who perceived well how heartily, and with what good intention I was making my inquiry, allowed me to continue it further than I had yet done. "The evil," said he at once, "is the partiality of the Government for manufactures." "And what next?" "Their monopoly, their tyranny, their unreasonableness." "Is that all?" He was silent for a minute or two, and then with a sigh uttered these important words: "There is another evil, sir,—*we are unsociable.*"

Those words pierced me to the heart, and fell upon me like a sentence of death. How many reasons had I to suppose this was just and true! How many times it recurred to me! "What!" said I to myself, "is France, that country renowned beyond all others for the eminently sociable agreeableness of its manners and of its genius, immutably divided, and for ever! If it be so, have we any

\* But seemingly they were too irksome to the two sentiments which characterise our age,—the love of personal property, and that of the family. Read a very curious pamphlet by M. Dupin, Sen.—*Excursion dans la Nièvre*, 1840.—See also my "*Origines de Droit*," ou *collaboratio*, the *parsonniers*, the *chanteau*, *vivre à un pain et un pot*, &c.

chance left of living, and are we not already dead even before death? Is the soul dead within us? Are we worse than our fathers, whose pious associations are incessantly being lauded? \* And is love, is brotherhood for ever at an end in this world?"

In such sombre thoughts, resolved, like a dying man, to feel well whether I was dying, I considered seriously not the highest, nor the lowest, but one man, neither good nor bad, a man in whom several classes are represented, who has seen and suffered, and who, certainly in spirit and in heart, bears within himself the thought of the people. That man, who is no other than myself, though living alone and in voluntary seclusion, has nevertheless remained sociable and sympathetic.

There are also many others in the same predicament. An immutable, unalterable fund of sociability sleeps here in the depth of society. It remains wholly treasured up; I perceive it everywhere among the masses when I descend into them, when I listen and observe. But how can we wonder if this instinct of easy sociability, so discouraged of late, has shut itself up and retired? After being deceived by different parties, speculated upon by commercial people, and treated with suspicion by the Government, it no longer either stirs or acts. All the powers of society seem turned against the sociable instinct! To unite stones and disunite men is all they know.

Patronage by no means makes good in this case what is wanting to the spirit of association. The recent appearance of the idea of equality has stifled (for a time) the idea that had preceded it,—that of benevolent protection, adoption, and fraternity. The rich man has sternly said to the poor one: "You claim equality, and the rank of brother? Well, be it so! But, from this moment, you shall get no assistance from me; God imposed upon me the duties of a father; by claiming equality, you yourself have absolved me from them.†

\* Necessity alone, with its iron chains, had bound together the ancient barbarous associations (see in my "Origines," the terrible forms of blood, drunk or shed — underground, &c.) — necessity, I say, and the certainty of perishing, if people remained disunited. In monastic associations, friendship is strictly forbidden, as a theft committed against God (see my "Histoire de France," vol. v. p. 12. note). The barbarity of the *compagnonage*, and its own attempt at reformation (see A. Perduquier), teach us well enough what were the commercial associations of the middle ages. Brotherhoods, originating in danger and prayer (so natural to man in peril), certainly hated strangers more than they loved themselves. The banner of the holy patrons rallied them, and led them from the procession to the combat. It was much less brotherhood than a defensive league and power, often offensive too, in the hates and jealousy of trades.

† The effort of the world and its salvation will be to recover the harmony of these two ideas. Fraternity and paternity, two words irreconcilable in the

Among this people, we run far less chance of being on the wrong scent than with any other. No social comedy, no outward difference can create an illusion as to their sociability. They have not the subdued manners of the Germans. They are not like the English, ever with their hats off before all who are rich or noble. If you speak to them, and they answer you civilly and cordially, you may fairly believe that they pay that tribute truly to the person, very little to his position.

The Frenchman has passed through many trials — revolution and warfare. Such a man is most assuredly difficult to guide, and difficult in associating. Why? Precisely because, as an individual, he has much valour.

You are making men of iron in your war of Africa; a very personal war, which compels man incessantly to rely only upon himself. No doubt you are right in wishing to have and to form them such, on the eve of the crisis which we must expect in Europe. But, at the same time, be not much surprised if those lions, who have but just returned, retain, even in submitting to the curb of the laws, something of a savage independence.

Those men, I warn you, will take to association only through the influence of the heart, through friendship. Do not think that you will yoke them to a negative society in which the soul will have no place, or that they will live together without loving one another, by economy and natural gentleness of character — as, for instance, the German workmen do at Zurich. The co-operative society of the English, who unite perfectly well for any special affair, though hating and thwarting one another in some affair in which their interests differ, does not suit our Frenchmen. France must have a society of friends; it is her commercial disadvantage, but her social superiority, not to admit of any other. Union is effected here neither by weakness of character and community of habits, nor by an eagerness of huntsmen who herd together like wolves for a prey. The only union possible here is the union of minds.

There is scarcely any form of association that is not excellent, if this condition exist. The main question, with this sympathetic people, is that of persons and moral characters. “Do the members of the association love and suit one another?” That is what must always be inquired in the first place.\* Societies of workmen will be

family, are not so in the least in civil society. It finds, as I have already said, the model which harmonizes them, in the moral society which every man bears within him. See the end of the second part.

\* In association, the form is doubtless important, but it is only secondary.

formed, and they will last, *if they love one another* ; and societies of master-workmen, who, without chiefs, will live as brothers, but there *must be great mutual love*.

To love is not simply to have feelings of mutual benevolence. The natural attraction of characters and analogous tastes would not suffice. It is necessary to follow one's nature, even heartily ; that is to say, to be ever ready for sacrifice, and that devotedness which immolates nature.

What would you do in this world without sacrifice ? \* It is its very support ; without it, the world would presently tumble to pieces. Even with the best instincts, the most upright characters, the most perfect natures (such as are not seen here below) — every thing would perish without this supreme remedy.

“ Sacrifice one's self to another ! ” Strange unheard of motto, which will offend the ears of our philosophers. “ Sacrifice one's self to whom ? To a man whom we know to be worth less than ourselves ; and lose, for the advantage of this nonentity, an infinite value ! ” It is this, in fact, that no one seldom fails to attribute to himself. This is, we do not attempt to disguise it, a real difficulty. People seldom sacrifice themselves for any thing but what they believe to be infinite. For sacrifice, they must have a God, an altar ; a God, in whom men recognise and love one another. How then could we sacrifice ourselves ? We have lost our Gods !

Was the *Logos* (*Dieu verbe*), in the form in which it was con-

To re-establish ancient forms, *corporations*, commercial tyrannies ; resume shackles in order to walk the better ; undo the work of the Revolution, and destroy inconsiderately what was demanded for so many ages, — appears to me to be madness. On the other hand, to imagine that the State, that does so little of its own, could perform the functions of universal manufacturer and tradesman — what is this but to *trust every thing to the functionary* ! Is this functionary an angel ? When invested with this strange power, will he be less corrupt than the manufacturer or the tradesman ? What is certain is, that he will never have their activity. — As to *community*, three words will suffice. *Natural* community is a very ancient, barbarous, and unproductive state. *Voluntary* community is a fleeting transport, an heroic emotion, which marks a new faith, and which soon declines. *Forced* community, imposed by violence, is a thing impossible at a period when property is equally divided, and nowhere more impossible than in France. To return to the possible forms of association, I think they ought to *differ according to the different professions*, which, more or less complicated, require more or less unity of direction ; and also according to the different countries, and to the diversity of national genius. This essential observation, which I shall some day develope, might be supported by an immense number of facts.

\* No period has exhibited such famous examples. In what age were such great armies, so many millions of men, ever seen to suffer and die, without revolt, meekly, and in silence ?

sidered by the middle ages, this necessary tie? Universal history is ready here to answer, No. The middle ages promised union, and gave only war. It was necessary that God should have a second period, and appear upon earth in his incarnation of '89. He then gave to association its form, at once the most vast and most true, that which still alone can unite us, and by us save the world.

O France! glorious mother! you who are not only ours, but who are destined to restore every nation to liberty, teach us to love one another in you!

## CHAPTER IV.

## OUR COUNTRY. ARE NATIONALITIES ABOUT TO DISAPPEAR?

NATIONAL antipathies have diminished, the law of nations has become more humane, we have entered upon an era of benevolence and brotherhood, if we but compare our own times with the malevolent period of the middle ages. Nations have already become somewhat amalgamated by interests, and mutually copied their fashions and their literature. Are we thence to infer that nationalities are on the decline? Let us inquire carefully.

One thing is most assuredly on the decline in every nation — intestine dissent. Our French provincialities are rapidly disappearing. Scotland and Wales have joined the British unity. Germany is seeking for hers, and fancies herself ready to sacrifice to it a long list of conflicting interests, which have hitherto kept her divided.

This sacrifice of the different intestine nationalities to the great nationality which contains them, beyond all doubt, strengthens the latter. It effaces, perhaps, the striking picturesque particulars, which characterised a people in the eyes of the superficial observer; but it strengthens their genius, and permits them to display it. It is at the moment when France has suppressed in her bosom each conflicting France, that she has given her high and original revelation. She found she was herself, and, whilst proclaiming the future common rights of the world, she distinguished herself from the world more than she had ever done before.

We may say as much of England: with her machinery, her vessels, and her fifteen millions of workmen, she differs at present from all other nations much more than in the time of Elizabeth. Germany, who in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was groping about to find herself, has at length discovered herself in Goethe, Schelling, and Beethoven; it is only since that period that she has been able to aspire earnestly after unity.

So far are nationalities from disappearing, that I see them every day morally characterising themselves; and, from being what they were, collections of men, becoming individuals. It is the natural progress of life. Every man, at his origin, feels his genius confusedly; he seems, in his early years, to be *any man*; as he advances, he investigates himself, and goes on characterising himself outwardly

by his acts, his works ; he becomes gradually *an individual man*, leaves class, and deserves a name.

The opinion that nationalities are soon about to disappear, can be the result of but two causes : — First, an ignorance of history, an acquaintance with it only by shallow formulas, like the philosophers who never study it, or else by literary commonplaces, to prattle about it, like the women. They who know it thus, see it in the past like a small obscure point, which they may blot out if they will. Secondly, this is not all ; we must also be as ignorant of nature as of history, forget that national characteristics are not at all derived from our caprices, but are profoundly based upon the influence of climate, food, and the natural productions of a country ; that, though they may become somewhat modified, they are never effaced.} Those who are not thus bound, either by physiology or history, and who constitute humanity without inquiring about either man or nature, may, at their leisure, efface every frontier, fill up rivers, and level mountains. I warn them, however, that the nations will still subsist, unless they intend to eradicate cities, the great centres of civilisation, where nationalities have summed up their genius.

We said towards the end of the second part of this book, that if God has placed anywhere the type of the political City, it was, according to every appearance, in the moral City, — I mean in the soul of man. Well ! what does this soul do first ? It takes up a fixed position, meditates there, forms for itself a body, a dwelling-place, a train of ideas. And then it can act. In the same manner, the soul of a people ought to make for itself a central point of organism ; it should seat itself on one spot, collect itself, meditate, and harmonise itself with some nature or other : the seven hills, for instance, for that little Rome ; or, for our France, the Ocean, the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, for those are our seven hills.

It is a power for every life to circumscribe itself, to carve for one's self a share of time and space, to feed on something of our own, in the midst of indifferent and dissolving nature, that would wish ever to confound. This is existence — this is to live !

A mind fixed upon one point will go on fathoming itself. A mind floating in space, dissolves and fades away. Behold the man who shares his love with many : he dies without having known love ; let him love but once, and long, and he finds in one passion the infinity of nature and all the progress of the world.\*

\* The native land (or motherland as the Dorians so appropriately termed it) is the love of loves. She appears to us in our dreams as a young adored mother, or a powerful nurse who suckles us by millions. A poor image ! Not only does she nourish us, but she contains us within herself : *in eâ movemur et sumus*.



The Patria, the City, far from being opposed to nature, are for that soul of the people which dwells therein, the single and all-powerful means of realising its nature, giving it, at once, the vital starting-point and the liberty of development. Imagine the Athenian genius, without Athens; it floats, wanders, is lost, and dies unknown. But set in the narrow but happy frame of such a city, built on that exquisite land, where the bee gathered the honey of Sophocles and Plato, the mighty genius of Athens has made as much of an imperceptible city, in two or three centuries, as twelve nations of the middle ages in a thousand years.

The most powerful means employed by God to create and augment distinctive originality, is to maintain the world harmoniously divided into those grand and beautiful systems which we call nations, each of which opening to man a different field of action, is a living education.\* The more man advances, the more he enters into the spirit of his country, and the better he contributes to the harmony of the globe; he learns to know his native country, both in its positive and in its relative value, as a note in the grand concert; by it, he participates therein; and in it, he loves the world. One's native country forms the necessary initiation to the country of all mankind.

Union is thus always advancing without any danger of ever attaining unity, since every nation, at every step it takes towards concord†, is more original in itself. If, by an impossibility, diversities were to cease, if unity were established, every nation singing the same note, the concert would be at an end; harmony in confusion would be nothing but an unmeaning sound. The world, monotonous and barbarous, might then perish without even causing a regret.

\* Every thing tends to this education. No object of art, no branch of industry, even of luxury, no form of exalted culture is without action upon the mass, without influence upon the lowest,—the poorest. In this great body of a nation, spiritual circulation goes on, insensibly descending and ascending, to and from the highest and the lowest. One idea enters by the eyes (fashions, shops, museums, &c.), another by conversation, by language, which is the grand *dépôt* of general advancement. All receive the mind of all, without perhaps analysing it; but at all events they receive it.

† In proportion as a nation enters upon the possession of its own genius, and reveals and establishes it by works, it needs less and less to oppose it by war to that of other nations. Its originality, every day better secured, shines forth in production more than in opposition. National diversity, which manifested itself violently by war, displays itself still better when each nation lets its grand voice be heard distinctly: all used to shout in the self-same note; now each sings its own part; there is gradually a concert—harmony; the world becomes a lyre. But at what price is this harmony obtained? At the price of diversity.

Nothing will perish, I am sure of it, neither the soul of man, nor of the people: we are in too good hands. On the contrary, we shall go on ever living more, that is to say, strengthening our individuality, and acquiring more powerful and more productive originalities. God preserve us from losing our personal identity in Him! and if no soul perishes, how could those great souls of nations, with their vivid genius, their history rich in 'martyrs, abounding with heroic sacrifices, and brimful of immortality, ever perish? When one of them is momentarily eclipsed, the whole world is sick in all its nations, and the world of the heart in its fibres which respond to nations. Reader, that suffering fibre, which I see in your heart, is Poland and Italy.\*

Nationality, the fatherland, is ever the life of the world: it dead, all would be dead. Ask rather the people; they feel it, and will tell you. Ask science, history, and the experience of mankind. Those two grand voices are in unison. Two voices? No,—two realities,—what is and what was, opposed to empty abstraction.

Upon this point I set my heart and history; I was firm upon that rock, and wanted nobody to confirm my faith. But I have been in crowds, I have questioned the people, both young and old, small and great. I have heard them all give testimony for their native country. That is the living fibre which dies last in them. I have found it in the dead. I have been into those cemeteries called prisons, *bagnes*, and there I have opened the hearts of men; well, then, in these dead men, where the breast was empty, guess what I found,—France, once more! the last spark by which, perhaps, they might have been resuscitated.

Say not, I beseech you, that it is nothing at all to be born in the country surrounded by the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Rhine, and the Ocean. Take the poorest man, starving in rags, him whom you suppose to be occupied solely with material wants. He will tell you it is an inheritance of itself to participate in this immense glory, this unique legend which constitutes the talk of the world. He well knows that if he were to go to the most remote desert of the globe, under the equator or the poles, he would find Napoleon, our armies, our grand history, to shelter and protect him; that the children would come to him, that the old men would hold their peace and entreat him to speak, and that to hear him only mention those names, they would kiss the hem of his garment.

For our part, whatever happens to us, poor or rich, happy or unhappy, while on this side the grave, we will ever thank God for

\* Suffering, and now mute at the College of France, in the voice it still had in our dear and great Mickiewicz.

having given us this great France for our native land. And that, not only on account of the many glorious deeds she has performed, but because in her we find especially at once the representative of the liberties of the world, and the country that links all others together by sympathetic ties, the initiation to universal love. This last feature is so strong in France, that she has often forgotten herself. We must, at present, remind her of herself, and beseech her to love all the nations less than herself.

Doubtless, every great nation represents an idea important to the human race. But, gracious Heaven! how much more true is this of France! Suppose for a moment that she were eclipsed, at an end, the sympathetic bond of the world would be loosened, dissolved, and probably destroyed. Love, that constitutes the life of the world, would be wounded in its most vital part. The earth would enter into the frozen age where other worlds close at hand have already landed.

I had, on this very subject, a horrible dream in broad daylight, which I am forced to relate. I was in Dublin, near a bridge, and walking along the quay, looking at the river, which was gliding along, sluggish and narrow, between wide sandy strands, very much as we see ours at the *quai des Orfèvres*: — I thought I was by the Seine. The very quays were similar, without, however, the rich shops, the monuments, Tuileries, the Louvre; it was almost Paris without Paris. From that bridge were descending a few ill-dressed persons, not, as with us, in blouses, but in old stained coats. They were disputing violently, in a sharp, guttural, and very barbarous tone, with a frightful, ragged, humpbacked man, whom I still see before my eyes: other persons were passing along, miserable and deformed. As I looked at them, a strange idea took possession of me, terrified me, — that all those figures were Frenchmen. It was Paris — it was France — a France grown ugly, brutal, and savage. I experienced, at that moment, how great is the credulity of terror; I made no objection. I said to myself that another 1815 must have happened, but long, long ago; that ages of misery had oppressed my irrevocably doomed country, and that I had returned thither to take my share in that world of suffering. Those ages were crushing me, like a mass of lead; so many centuries in two minutes! I remained riveted to the spot, unable to stir. My fellow-traveller shook me, and then I recollected myself a little; but I could not quite banish from my mind that terrible dream — I was inconsolable; as long as I remained in Ireland, it filled me with an overpowering melancholy, which has even now returned to me, with all its vividness, as I trace these lines.

## CHAPTER V.

## FRANCE.

THE head of one of our economical schools said a few years ago, "What is our native country?"

Their cosmopolite Utopias of material enjoyments seem to me, I confess, a prosaic commentary on the poetry of Horace:—"Rome is tumbling down, let us fly to the fortunate islands;" that sad song of abandonment and despondency.

The Christians who come next, with their celestial country and universal brotherhood here below, do not the less give the death-blow to the empire by this beautiful and affecting doctrine. Their brethren of the north soon come and put the rope round their necks.

We are not the sons of a slave, without a country and without gods, as was the great poet we have just quoted; we are not Romans of Tarsus, like the apostle of the Gentiles; we are the Romans of Rome, and the Frenchmen of France. We are the sons of those who, by the efforts of an heroic nationality, have done the work of the world, and founded, for every nation, the gospel of equality. Our fathers did not comprehend brotherhood in the sense of that vague sympathy which induces one to accept and love every thing which amalgamates, degenerates, and confounds. They believed brotherhood was not the blind amalgamation of existences and characters, but much rather the union of hearts. They preserved for themselves, for France, the originality of devotedness, of sacrifice which no one disputed with them; and alone, she watered with her blood the tree that she planted. It was a glorious opportunity for the other nations not to leave her thus alone. They did not imitate France in her devotedness; and do they now want France to imitate them in their egotism, their immoral indifference, and, as she failed in exalting them, now to descend to their level?

Who could see without astonishment the same people that lately raised the beacon of the future towards which the eyes of the world are turned, now walking with downcast look in the road of imitation? What is that road? We know it but too well; many nations have followed it: it is simply the road to suicide and death.

Poor imitators! so you think that is imitation? They take from a neighbouring people this or that which among them is a living thing; they appropriate it to themselves, ill or well, in spite of the

repugnance of a frame that was not made for it: but it is a foreign body that you are engrafting in your flesh; it is an inert lifeless thing; it is death that you are adopting.

What shall we say, if this thing is not only foreign and different, but even hostile? If you will go and seek for it precisely among those whom nature has given you for adversaries, whom she has diametrically opposed to you? If you ask a renewal of life from that which is the negation of your own life? If France, for instance, proceeding in the direct teeth of her history and her nature, goes and copies what may be called Anti-France — England.

Here there is no question of national animosity, or of blind malvolence. We entertain the esteem that we ought for that great British nation; we have proved it, while studying it, as earnestly as any man of the present day. The result of this study and this very esteem is the conviction that the progress of the world depends on these two nations not losing their respective qualities in an indistinct amalgamation, on these two opposite magnets acting inversely, and these two electricities, positive and negative, never being confounded.

The element which, of all others, was the most heterogeneous for us — the English element — is precisely that to which we have given the preference. We have adopted it, politically, into our constitution, on the faith of the *doctrinaires* who copied without comprehending it; into our literature, without seeing that the foremost genius that England has had in our days, is he who has the most strongly denied it. Lastly, a thing incredible and ridiculous, we have adopted this same English element in art and in fashion. That stiffness, that awkwardness, which is not external nor accidental, but proceeds from a profound physiological mystery — we copy even that.

I have now before me two novels, written with much talent. Well! in these French novels, who is the ridiculous man? The Frenchman — always the Frenchman. The Englishman is the admirable man — the invisible, yet ever present Providence, who saves every thing. He comes in just in time to repair all the follies of the other. How? Because he is rich. The Frenchman is poor, and poor in intellect. Rich! Is that, then, the cause of this singular infatuation? The rich man (for the most part the Englishman) is the well-beloved of God. The most liberal, the strongest minds find it difficult to guard themselves from a prepossession in his favour. The women find him handsome, the men would fain believe him to be noble. His sorry nag is taken as a model by the artists.

Rich! Come, confess this is the secret motive of the universal admiration. England is the rich nation; never mind her millions of beggars. For any one who does not investigate mankind, she

presents to the world an unparalleled spectacle, that of the most enormous accumulation of wealth that ever existed. A triumphant agriculture, so much machinery, so many vessels, so many warehouses all choke-full, that Exchange, the mistress of the world — gold flows there like water.

Oh ! France has nothing like that ; it is a country of poverty. The comparative statement of all that the one possesses and all that the other does not, would really lead us too far. England can with a good grace ask France with a smile, what are, then, after all, the visible results of her activity ? — what remains of her labours, of so many commotions, and so many efforts ? \*

Behold poor France ! sitting on the ground, like Job, among her friends, the nations, who come to comfort, interrogate, better her, if they can, and work out her salvation !

“ Where are thy vessels, thy machinery ? ” says England : and Germany, “ Where are thy systems ? Have ye not at least, like Italy, works of art to show ? ”

Kind sisters, who come thus to comfort France, permit me to answer you : she is ill, mind you, I see her head drooping — she will not speak.

If we would heap up all the blood, the gold, the efforts of every kind, that each nation has expended for disinterested matters, that were to be profitable only to the world, France would have a pyramid that would reach to heaven ; and yours, O nations ! all of you put together — oh ! yours ! the pile of your sacrifices would reach up to the knee of an infant !

Do not, then, come and say to me, “ How pale France is ! ” She has shed her blood for you. “ How poor she is ! ” For your sake she has given away without reckoning ; † and having no longer any

\* The visible results of France, the durable results of her work, are nothing in comparison to those not obvious to the eye. The latter were mostly acts, movements, words, and thoughts. Her written literature (which is, however, the first in my opinion) is far, very far below her oratory, and her brilliant and fruitful conversation. Her manufactures of every description are nothing when compared to her actions. For machines, she had heroes ; for systems, men inspired. “ But are not these words and acts unproductive things ? ” And that is precisely what places France very high. She has excelled in things of movement and grace, in those which serve no purpose. Above whatever is material, tangible, are found the imponderable, the intangible, the invisible. Then, never class her according to material things, by what is touched and seen. Do not judge her as you would another, by what you notice of outward misery ; it is the country of the mind, and consequently the one that affords the least hold to the material procedure of the world.

† I write down here, in weakening it, a thought that struck me during my first journeys across the frontier. Once, especially, as I was entering Switzerland, I felt wounded to the heart by it. To see our poor peasants of Franche-

thing, she has said, "I have neither gold nor silver, but what I have I give unto you." Then she gave her soul, and it is that on which you are living.\*

"What she has left is what she has given away?" Come, listen to me well, and learn, O nations! what without us you would never have learned: "the more one gives, the more one keeps!" Her spirit may slumber within her, but it is always entire, and ever on the point of waking in its might.

For a very long time I have been France, living day after day with her for two thousand years. We have seen the worst day together; and I have acquired this faith, that this country is the one of invincible hope. God certainly must enlighten it more than any other nation, since she sees in the darkest night, when others can no longer distinguish: during that dreadful darkness which often prevailed in the middle ages and since, nobody perceived the sky; France alone saw it.

Such is France: with her nothing is finished, but always to be recommenced.

When our Gallic peasants drove away the Romans for a moment, and established an empire of the Gauls, they stamped upon their coin the first motto of this country (and the last) — *Hope!*

Comté so miserable: and suddenly, after passing a stream, the people of Neufchatel so comfortable, so well clothed, and evidently happy! What are, at bottom, those two principal loads, the debt and the army, that are now crushing France? Two sacrifices that she is making to the world as much as to herself. The debt is the money that she pays it for having given it her principle of salvation, the law of liberty that it copies in calumniating her. And the army of France? Is the defence of the world, the reserve that it keeps for the day when the barbarians will arrive, when Germany ever seeking her unity (which she has been seeking ever since Charlemagne), will be obliged either to put us before her, or to make herself, against liberty, the vanguard of Russia.

\* No, it is not the commercial machinism of England, nor the scholastic machinism of Germany, that gives life to the world; but the breath of France, in whatever state she may be, the latent heat of her Revolution that Europe ever bears within her,

## CHAPTER VI.

FRANCE SUPERIOR AS DOGMA, AND AS LEGEND.

FRANCE IS A RELIGION.

THE foreigner thinks he has exhausted the subject, when he says, smiling, "France is the infant of Europe."

If you give her this title, which, in the eyes of God, is not the least one, you must confess that it is the infant Solomon sitting in judgment. Who, but France, has preserved the tradition of the law?

Of ecclesiastical, political, and civil law; the chair of Papinienus, and the stool of Gregory VII.

Rome is nowhere but here. Ever since Saint Louis, to whom has Europe gone to ask for justice? The pope, the emperor, and the kings? Who could disown the theological popedom in Gerson and Bossuet, the philosophical popedom in Descartes and Voltaire, the political and civil popedom in Cujas and Dumoulin, in Rousseau and Montesquieu? Her laws, which are but those of reason itself, force themselves upon her very enemies. England has just given the Code Napoleon to the island of Ceylon.

Rome held the pontificate of the dark ages, the royalty of the obscure; and France has been the pontiff of the ages of light.

This is not an accident of the latter ages, a revolutionary chance. It is the legitimate result of a particular tradition, connected with general tradition, for two thousand years. No people has one like it. In this is continued the grand human movement (so clearly marked out by the languages) from India to Greece and to Rome, and from Rome to us.

Every other history is mutilated, ours alone is complete; take the history of Italy, the last centuries are wanting; take the history of Germany, or of England, the first are missing; take that of France, with it you know the world.

And in this grand tradition there is not only a connected series, but progress. France has continued the Roman and Christian work. Christianity had promised, and she has performed. Brotherly equality, postponed to the next life, has been taught by her to the world, as the law here below.

This nation has two very potent qualities that I do not find in any other. She has at once the principle and the legend, the idea more comprehensive and more humane, and, at the same time, a more connected tradition.



This principle, this idea, sunk in the middle ages under the dogma of grace, are, in the language of man, called brotherhood.

It is this tradition which, from Cæsar to Charlemagne, to Saint Louis, and from Louis XIV. to Napoleon, makes the history of France that of humanity. In her is perpetuated under divers forms, the moral ideal of the world, from Saint Louis to the maid of Orleans, Joan of Arc, and from her to our young generals of the Revolution ; the Saint of France, whoever he is, is the Saint of all nations ; he is adopted, blessed, and lamented by the human race.

"For every man," said an American philosopher impartially, "the first country is his native land, and the second is France." But how many men like better to live here than in their own country ! As soon as ever they can break for a moment the thread that binds them, they come, poor birds of passage, to settle, take refuge, and enjoy here at least a moment's vital heat. They tacitly avow that this is the universal country.

This nation, considered thus as the asylum of the world, is much more than a nation, it is a living brotherhood. Into whatever weakness she may fall, she contains, at the bottom of her Nature, this living principle, which preserves for her, happen what may, particular chances of restoration.

The day when France, remembering that she was, and must be, the salvation of mankind, will place her children around her, and teach them France, as faith and as religion, she will find herself living, and firm as the globe.

What I say here is an important matter, of which I have long thought, and which contains, perhaps, the regeneration of our country. It is the only one that has the right thus to teach itself, because it is the one that has the most mixed up its own interest and its own destiny with those of humanity. It is the only one that can do so, because its great national and yet universal legend is the only complete one, and the most connected of all, the one that by its historical concatenation answers the best to the demands of reason.

And this is not fanaticism ; it is the concise expression of an earnest opinion founded upon long study. It would be very easy for me to show that the other nations have but special legends which the world has not accepted. These legends, moreover, have often the character of being isolated, individual, without any connection, like points of light separated from one another.\* The natural legend

\* To speak first of that great nation which seems the richest in legends Germany — those of Sigfrid the invulnerable, Frederic Barbarossa, and Goet with the iron hand, are poetical dreams, which turn life back to the past, the impossible, and to vain regrets. Luther, rejected and spit upon by one half of Germany, has not been able to leave a legend. Frederic, hardly a German, but a Prussian (which is very different) — a Frenchman, moreover, and a phi-

of France is an immense, uninterrupted stream of light, a true milky way, upon which the world has ever its eyes fixed.

Germany and England, in race, language, and instinct, are strangers to the great Romano-Christian and democratical tradition of the world. They have a certain share in it, but without well bringing it into unison with their basis, which is exceptional: they have it obliquely, indirectly, awkwardly—have it, and yet have it not. Observe well those nations; you will find in them, both in their physical and mental endowments, a discordance of life and principle, which France does not present, and which (even without reckoning intrinsic value by stopping at the form and consulting only art) ought ever to prevent the world from seeking there their models and their instruction.

France, on the contrary, is not composed of two principles. In her, the Celtic element has combined with the Roman, and makes but one with it. The Germanic element, about which some make so much noise, is truly imperceptible.

She proceeds from Rome, and she ought to teach Rome, its language, history, and law. In this our education is not at fault. It is at fault, inasmuch as it does not imbue this Roman education with the sentiment of France; it lays much scholastic stress upon Rome, which is the way, and conceals France, which is the goal.

It would be necessary, at the very entrance, to point out this goal to the child, to make him set out from France, which is himself, and bring him back by way of Rome to France, again to himself. Then only would our education be perfect.

The day when this people, returning to themselves, will open their eyes and consider themselves, they will understand that the first institution that can make them live and last, is to give to *all* (in greater or less extent, according to the time at their command) this harmonious education, which would found the country in the very heart of the child. Other salvation there is none. We have grown old in our vices, and wish not to be cured of them. If God save this glorious but unfortunate country, he will save it by means of infancy.

losopher — has left the trace of strength, but nothing for the heart, nothing as poetry, or national faith.

The historical legends of England, the victory of Edward III., and that of Elizabeth, present rather a glorious fact than a moral model. One type, thanks to Shakspeare, has remained very powerful in the English mind, and influence it but too much, — that of Richard III. It is curious to observe how easily their tradition has broken up; it seems as though three times three different nations had sprung up. The ballads of Robin Hood and others, with which the middle ages fed themselves, finish with Shakspeare; Shakspeare is put to silence by the Bible, by Cromwell, and by Milton, who, also, are effaced by industrialism and the half-great men of later ages. Where is their complete man on whom a legend might be founded?

## CHAPTER VII.

THE FAITH OF THE REVOLUTION — IT HAS NOT KEPT ITS FAITH  
TILL THE END, AND HAS NOT TRANSMITTED ITS SPIRIT BY  
EDUCATION.

THE only government that has busied itself heartily about the education of the people is that of the Revolution. The constituent and legislative Assembly laid down the principles with admirable clearness, and with a sentiment truly humane. The Convention, in the middle of her terrible struggle against the world, and against France, whom she saved in spite of herself, among the personal dangers she encountered, being assassinated piecemeal, decimated, and mutilated, never let go her hold, but prosecuted with obstinacy this holy and sacred subject of the people's education; in those stormy nights, when she sat in arms, prolonging each session which might be her last, she nevertheless took the time to call forth every system, and to examine them: "If we decree education," said one of her members, "we shall have lived long enough."

The three projects adopted are full of good sense and greatness of soul. At first they organise the high and the low, the normal and the primary schools. They kindle a bright flame, and transport it instantly into the vast depths of the people. After that, being more at leisure, they fill up the intervening space, the central schools or colleges, where the rich may be educated. Nevertheless, every thing is created uniformly and harmoniously; they knew then that a living work is not to be made bit by bit.

O ever memorable day! It was two months after the 9 Thermidor. They were beginning to believe in life again. France, issuing from the tomb, suddenly grown more mature by twenty ages, enlightened, yet bloody France, called all her children to receive the sovereign instruction of her great experience, — she said to them: Come and see.\*

\* And the principal fruit of that experience is, that human blood has a terrible virtue against those who have shed it. It would be too easy for me to prove that France was saved *in spite of the reign of Terror*. Those terrorists have done us an immense mischief, which still lasts. Go into the lowest cot-

When the *rapporteur* of the Convention pronounced these simple important words: "Time alone could be the professor of the Republic," whose eyes were not filled with tears? They had all paid dearly the lesson of the time, they had all passed through death, and had not escaped entire!

After those great trials there seemed to be a moment's silence for all human passions; one might have fancied there was no longer any pride, self-interest, or envy. The highest men in the state, and in science, accepted the most humble offices of public instruction.\* Lagrange and Laplace taught arithmetic.

Fifteen hundred pupils, men full grown, and several already illustrious, came unhesitatingly to take their seats on the benches of the normal school, to learn to teach. They came as they could, in the depth of winter, at that moment of poverty and famine. Above the ruins of all material things hovered the majesty of the mind, alone and without a shadow. The chair of the great school was occupied in turns by creative geniuses; some, like Berthollet and Morvan, came to found chemistry, to open and penetrate the inner world of

tage of the most distant country of Europe, and you will find the remembrance of this and its malediction. Kings have put to death in cold blood upon their scaffolds, in their Spielbergs, their *presides*, and their Siberias, &c. &c., a much greater number of men. What does that matter? The victims of the reign of Terror do not the less remain ever bleeding in the minds of nations. We ought never to lose an opportunity of protesting against those horrors which were not *ours*, and are not imputable to us. The enthusiastic vigour of our armies alone saved France. The committee of public safety doubtless seconded that enthusiasm, but precisely by the excellent military administrators they had among themselves, whom Robespierre detested, and would have put to death, had he been able to do without them. Our purest generals found in Robespierre and his friends only malevolence, distrust, and obstacles of every kind. I have not the time now to enter into all this. But on this head I beg that those who reprint the useful compilation of Messrs. Roux and Buchez will suppress their sad paradoxes, the apology of the 2d September and the Saint Bartholomew, the *brevet* of good Catholics given to the Jacobins, the satire against Charlotte Corday (t. xxiii. p. 237.), and the eulogy of Marat. "Marat distributed his denunciations with upright good sense and pretty sure tact" (p. 345.): — a judicious praise of the man who demanded two hundred thousand heads at once (see the "Publiciste," 14th Dec., 1792). These neo-Catholics, in their fine justification of the reign of Terror, have taken seriously that which Ch. Modier, the paradoxical edition of the "Quotidienne," amused himself to make. I should not have made this observation, if they did not endeavour to spread these absurdities, by cheap newspapers, among the people and the workmen who have no time for inquiry.

\* I have before me (Aux Archives) the original list of those who accepted the office of professors in the central schools, which were the colleges of those times: Sieyes, Daunou, Roederer, Haüy, Cabanis, Legendre, Lacroix, Bossut, Saussure, Cuvier, Fontanes, Ginguene, Laharpe, Laromiguiere, &c.

bodies ; others, like Laplace and Lagrange, had, by calculation, strengthened the system of the world, and secured the earth upon its basis. Never did spiritual power appear more indisputable. Reason, by obedience, yielded to reason. And how much did the heart participate in it, when among those matchless men, each of whom appears but once in countless ages, they saw a very precious life, the good Haüy, who, when on the eve of perishing, was saved by Geoffroy-Saint-Hilaire !

A great citizen, Carnot, he who organised victory, foresaw Hoche and Bonaparte, and saved France in spite of the reign of Terror, was the real founder of the Polytechnic School. They learned, as they fought, completed three years of lectures in three months. At the end of six, Monge declared that they had not only received science, but that they had advanced it. Being the spectators of the uninterrupted inventions of their masters, they too went on inventing. Imagine the spectacle of a Lagrange, who, in the middle of his lecture, suddenly stopped short, and mused. The auditory waited in silence. He at length awoke, and delivered to them, all glowing as it was, his infant invention, hardly yet emanated from his mind.

Every thing was wanting, except genius. The pupils could not have come, had they not had a remuneration of four sous a-day. They received food, with the food of the mind. One of the masters (Clouet) would have for salary only a nook of ground in the sandy plains of the Sablons, and lived on the vegetables that he cultivated there.

What a fall, after that time ! a moral fall, and not less great in the sphere of the mind. Read after the reports made in the Convention, those of Fourcroy and Fontane, and you lapse in a few years from manhood to old age — decrepit old age.\*

Is it not painful to see that heroic disinterested transport of enthusiasm decline and fall so soon ? That glorious Ecole Normale bears no fruit. We are but little surprised at it, when we see that man was taught so little, the sciences of man renouncing and contradicting themselves, being, as it were, ashamed of themselves. The professor of history, Volney, taught that history *is the science of dead facts*, — that there is no living history. Garat, the professor of philosophy, said that philosophy *is only the study of signs* ; in other words, that philosophy is nothing. Signs against signs, the

\* One man had the rare courage to protest, under the empire, in favour of the organisation given to instruction by the convention : Lacroix, " Essais sur l'Enseignement, 1805."

mathematics had the advantage, as well as the cognate sciences, such as astronomy. Thus, Revolutionary France, in the great school that was to diffuse its spirit throughout the world, lectured on the fixed stars, and forgot herself.

It is here especially, in this last effort of the revolution to found, that we see it could be only a prophet, and was dying in the desert, without having seen the promised land. How could it have reached its destination? It had been obliged to do every thing, having found nothing ready, and no aid in the system that preceded it. It had entered upon possession of an empty world, *and by right of disinheritance*. I will show some day, on unequivocal testimony, that it found nothing to destroy. The clergy, the nobility, and royalty were at an end, and it had nothing at all to put in their places. It went round in a vicious circle. Men were wanting to make the revolution; and to create those men she ought to have been already made. There was no assistance to perform the passage from one world to the other! A gulf to be traversed, and no wings to fly across it!

It is painful to witness how very little the guardians of the people, royalty and the clergy, have done to enlighten them in the four last centuries. The church spoke to them in a learned language that they no longer understood. She made them repeat by heart that prodigious metaphysical doctrine, the subtlety of which strikes with amazement the most cultivated minds. The State had done only one thing, and that very indirect; it had brought together the people into camps, and grand armies, where they began to appreciate themselves. The legions of Francis I., and the regiments of Louis XIV., were schools in which, without any instruction at all, they spontaneously formed themselves, imbibed common ideas, and rose by little and little, to the sentiment of their native country.

The only direct instruction was that which the citizens received in the colleges, and which they followed up as advocates and men of letters. It was a verbal study of languages, rhetoric, literature, and the study of the laws, not learned and precise, like that of our ancient juris-consults, but self-termed philosophical and full of shallow abstractions. Being logicians without metaphysics, civilians without law and history, they had no faith save in signs, forms, figures, phrases. In every thing, substance, life, and the sentiment of life, were wanting in them. When they arrived upon the great theatre where vanities waged war to the death, one could see all the bad qualities that scholastic subtlety can superadd to a bad nature. Those terrible *abstractors* of quintessence armed themselves with five

or six formulas, which, like so many guillotines, served them to *abstract* men.\*

It was a very terrible thing when that great assembly, which, under Robespierre, had made the reign of Terror by terror itself, raised her head, and saw all the blood she had shed. Faith had not failed her in the presence of the combined world, nor even against France, when, with thirty departments, she restrained and saved every thing. Faith had not failed her, even in her personal danger, when, having no longer even Paris, she was reduced to arm her own members, and saw herself very nearly without any defender but herself. But, in the presence of blood, before all those dead men who were rising from their tombs, before all that host of released prisoners who came to judge their judges, she felt faint, and began to abandon herself.

She did not take the step which would have put her in possession of the future. She had not the courage to put her hand upon the young rising world. The Revolution, to get possession of that, ought to have had one lesson, and that alone: the Revolution.

To do so, it would have been necessary, not to deny the past, but, on the contrary, to challenge it, seize it again, and make it her own, as she was doing with the present; and to show that she possessed, together with the authority of reason, that of history and all our historical nationality; that the revolution was the tardy, but just and necessary, manifestation of the genius of this people, that it was only France herself having at length discovered her right.

She did nothing of the kind, and the abstract reason, which she invoked alone to aid her, did not support her in presence of the

\* The genius of the inquisition and the police, which has astonished so many people in Robespierre and Saint-Just, little surprises those who are acquainted with the middle ages, and who find there so often those dispositions of inquisitors and sanguinary cavillers. This affinity of the two periods has been seized with much penetration by M. Quinet:—"Christianity and the French Revolution," p. 349—351 (1845). Two men of scrupulous equity, and inclined to judge their enemies favourably, Carnot and Daunou, agreed perfectly in their opinion of Robespierre. The latter has often told me that, except the last moment, when necessity and peril made him eloquent, the famous dictator was a man of secondary order. Saint-Just had more talent. They who wish to make us believe them both to have been innocent of the last excesses of the reign of Terror, are refuted by Saint-Just himself. On the 15th of April, 1794 (so short a time before the 9 Thermidor!), he deploras the culpable *indulgence* they have had till that moment, "In these latter days the *relachement des tribunaux* had increased to such a degree, &c. — What have the tribunals been doing for two years? *Have people spoken of their justice?*—Instituted to maintain the Revolution, their indulgence has left crime everywhere free," &c. — "Histoire Parlementaire, t. xxxii., p. 311. 319. 26 germināl an. ii.

terrible realities which were rising up against her. She doubted of herself, deposed, and effaced herself. It was necessary that she should die and enter the sepulchre, in order that her living spirit might spread throughout the world. Ruined by her defender, he pays her homage in the hundred days. Ruined as she was by the Holy Alliance, kings establish their compact against her, on the social dogma that she laid down in '89. The faith, which she had not in herself, prevails over those who have fought against her. The sword, with which they pierced her heart, works miracles and cures. She converts her persecutors, and instructs her enemies. Why did she not instruct her children?



## CHAPTER VIII.

## NO EDUCATION WITHOUT FAITH.

THE first question of education is this: Have you faith? Do you put faith?

The child must believe.

Let the child believe the things which, when a man, he may be able to prove to himself by reason.

To make a child a reasoner, a wrangler, or a critic, is an absurdity. To be incessantly stirring up, at our pleasure, all the seeds we have sown—what agriculture! To make a child learned, is absurd. To load his memory with a chaos of useful and useless knowledge—to heap up within him an indigested mass of a thousand ready-made things, not living, but dead, and dead fragments, without his ever having the whole:—this is to assassinate his mind.

Before *adding*, accumulating, one must *exist*. We must create and strengthen the living germ of the young being. The child *exists* at first by faith.

Faith is the common base of inspiration and action. There is nothing great without it.

The Athenian had the faith that all human culture had descended from the Acropolis of Athens, and that his Pallas, sprung from the brain of Jupiter, had produced the light of art and science. That faith was realised. That city, with her twenty thousand citizens, has inundated the world with her light; though dead, she enlightens it still.

The Roman had the faith that the living and bleeding head found under his Capitol, promised he should be the head, the judge, the prætor of the world. That faith was realised. If his empire has passed away, his law remains, and continues to regulate nations.

The Christian had the faith that a God-made-man would make a people of brothers, and would sooner or later unite the world in one and the same heart. That has not yet been verified, but it will be verified by us.

It was not sufficient to say that God was made man; this truth, remaining in such general terms, has not been productive. We must seek how God has manifested himself in the man of every nation, how, in the variety of national genius, the father has accommodated himself to the wants of his children. The unity that he ought to give us is not a monotonous unity, but a harmonious unity, in which all the varieties love one another.

Let them love, but let them subsist ; let them go on increasing in splendour, the better to enlighten the world ; and let man, from his childhood, accustom himself to recognise a living God in his native country.

Here, then, arises a serious objection : " How can I put faith, when I have so little myself ? Faith in my native country, like my religious faith, has grown weak within me."

If faith and reason were opposite things, having no reasonable means of obtaining faith, we should be obliged, like the mystics, to remain there, sigh and wait. But the faith, worthy of man, is a belief of love, in what is proved by reason. His object is not this or that accidental miracle, but the permanent miracle of nature and history.

In order to put faith in France, to hope in her future, we must re-ascend towards her past, and fathom her natural genius. If you do so, seriously and heartily, you will see the consequence infallibly follow from this study, and these established premises. From the deduction of the past, the future, the mission of France will arise before you ; it will appear to you in full light ; you will believe, and you will rejoice to believe ; faith is nothing else.

How would you be resigned to remain ignorant of France ? Your origin is in her ; if you know her not, you will know nothing of yourself. She surrounds and presses you on every side ; you live in her, and on her ; and you will die with her.

May she live, and you live, by faith ! She will return to your heart, if you look at your children, that young world which wishes to live, that is still so good and docile, and demands the life of belief. You have grown old in indifference ; but which of you would wish his son to be dead in heart, without a country, and without God ? All those children, in whom are the souls of our ancestors, are the old and new country. Let us help it to know itself ; and it will give us back the gift of loving.

As the poor man is necessary to the rich man, so is the child necessary to the man. We give him still less than we receive from him.

Young people, you who will soon take our place, I must thank you. Who, more than I, had studied the past of France ? Who should know her better, by so many personal trials, which have revealed to me her trials also ? Still, I must say, my soul, in solitude, had languished within me, and was either idling, at its leisure among curiosities and trifles, or else soaring towards the ideal, and not treading the ground. The reality escaped me, and our country, which I ever pursued and ever loved, was ever far below ; she was my object, my end and aim, an object of science and of study. She has appeared to me living. " In whom ?" In you who read me. In you, young man, I saw my country, her eternal youth. How should I not believe in her !

## CHAPTER IX.

GOD IN OUR NATIVE COUNTRY. — THE YOUNG COUNTRY OF THE FUTURE. — SACRIFICE. — THE MOTHER REVEALS GOD.

EDUCATION, like every work of art, demands, before every thing else, a simple, strong sketch ; no subtlety, no minutiae, nothing that presents any difficulty, or provokes objection.

By a grand, salutary, sound, and lasting impression, we must in this child found man, and create the life of the heart.

First, God revealed by the mother, in love and nature. Afterwards, God revealed by the father, in the living country, in her heroic history, in the sentiment of France.

God, and the love of God. Let the mother take him, on St. John's day, when the earth performs her annual miracle, when every herb is in flower, when the plant seems to grow while you behold it, — let her take him into the garden, embrace him, and say to him tenderly, " You love me, you know only me. Well ! listen : I am not all. You have another mother. All of us, men, women, children, animals, plants, and whatever has life, we have all a tender mother, who is ever feeding us, invisible but present. Love her, my dear child ; let us embrace her with all our hearts."

Let there long be nothing more. No metaphysics that destroy the impression. Let him brood over that sublime and tender mystery, which his whole life will not suffice to clear up. That is a day he will never forget. Throughout all the trials of life, and the intricacies of science, amid all his passions and stormy nights, the gentle sun of St. John's day will ever illumine the deepest recesses of his heart, with the immortal blossom of the purest, best love.

Some other day, later, when man is just beginning to be formed within him, his father takes him ; 'tis a great public festival, — immense crowds in Paris. He leads him from Notre Dame to the Louvre, the Tuileries, the triumphal arch. From some roof, or terrace, he shows him the people, the army passing, the bayonets clashing and glittering, and the tricoloured flag. In the moments of expectation especially, before the *fête*, by the fantastic reflections of the illumination, in that awful silence which suddenly takes place in that dark ocean of people, he stoops towards him and says, " There, my son, look, there is France, there is your native country ! All this is like one man, — one soul, one heart. They would all die

for one ; and each man ought also to live and die for all. Those men passing yonder, who are armed, and now departing, are going away to fight for us. They leave here their father, their aged mother, who will want them. You will do the same ; you will never forget that your mother is France."

If I know nature at all, this impression will be lasting. He has seen his country. That God, invisible in his high unity, is visible in his members, and the great works in which the life of the nation is deposited. It is really a living person that this child touches and feels on all sides : he cannot embrace her, but she embraces him, warms him with her great soul diffused throughout the mass, and speaks to him by her monuments. It is a charming sight for the Swiss to be able with one look to contemplate his canton, embrace from the heights of his Alps his beloved country, and bear away her image with him. But it is truly grand for the Frenchman, to have here the glorious and immortal *Patrie* gathered in one point, with all ages, all places together, and to follow, from the *Thermes de César* to the *Colonne*, to the Louvre, to the Champ-de-Mars, from the Arc de Triomphe to the Place de la Concorde, the history of France and the world.

Moreover, for the child, the strong or lasting knowledge of his country, is before all, the school, the grand national school, as it will one day be made. I speak of a truly common school, where children of every class and every condition should come for one or two years, to sit together (before special education begins) \*, and where they would learn nothing but France.

We hasten to place our children among children of our own class, whether citizens or people, in schools or colleges ; we avoid every mixture, we are quick to separate the poor and the rich at that happy period, when the child would not, of his own accord, have perceived these vain distinctions. We seem to be afraid of their truly knowing the world in which they are to live. By this premature separation, we prepare that hatred which springs from ignorance and envy, that internal warfare, from which we afterwards suffer.

If inequality must subsist among men, how I should wish that childhood might at least be able to follow its instinct for a moment, and live in equality ! That these little innocent men of God, devoid of envy, might preserve for us, in the school, the touching ideal of

\* The special education of the college or the workshop would come afterwards : the workshop, tempered and regulated by the school (according to the judicious views of M. Faucher, "*Travail des Enfants*"); the college tempered especially during the first years when the child would learn only as much grammar as he can understand. More exercise and recreation, and less useless writing. Mercy ! mercy for little children !

society ! And it would be also a school for us ; we should go and learn from them the vanity of ranks, the silliness of rival pretensions, and all the true life and happiness in there being neither a first nor a last class.

Our country would appear there young and charming ; at once in all her variety, and all her uniformity ; a diversity of characters, visages, races, — a rainbow with a hundred colours, all teeming with instruction. Every rank, every fortune, every dress, all together on the same benches ; velvet and the blouse, brown bread and dainty food. Let the rich, when still young, learn there what it is to be poor ; let him suffer from inequality, be allowed to participate, and strive already to re-establish equality according to his powers ; and may he find, seated on those wooden benches, the City of the World, and begin there the City of God !

The poor man, on the other hand, will learn, and recollect perhaps, that if this rich man is rich, it is not his fault ; after all, he was born so ; and his riches often render him poor in the first of qualities, poor in will and moral strength.

It would be a fine thing if all the sons of one same people, thus united, at least for a time, could see and know one another before the vices of poverty and riches, before the age of envy and egotism. The child would receive an indelible impression of his country, finding it in the school not only as a study and instruction, but as a living, an infant country, like himself, a better city before the City, a city of equality, where all would be seated at the same spiritual banquet.

And I would not only that he should learn and see his native country, but feel it as a Providence, recognising it as a mother and a nurse by its strengthening milk, its vivifying heat. God forbid that we should send away a boy from the school, or refuse him spiritual food, because he has not that of the body. Oh ! the impious avarice that would give millions to masons and to priests, that would be rich only to endow death \*, and yet would haggle with these little children, who are the hope, the dear life of France, and her heart of hearts !

I have said so elsewhere. I am not one of those who are always weeping, now with the hearty artisan who earns five francs, now with the poor woman who gains but ten sous. So impartial a pity is not pity. Women must have asylums, free convents, temporary

\* And it is death that teaches ! The *Ignorantins* force on the children the Jesuits' History of France (Loriquet), in which I read, among other infamous calumnies, that which the emigrant Vauban has himself contradicted : that at Quiberon, Hoche *had promised life and liberty* to whoever would lay down their arms, t. ii. p. 256.

workshops, and not be starved any longer in convents.\* And to little children we must all be fathers, and open our arms to them; the school must be their asylum, a pleasant generous asylum; let them be comfortable there, and go there of their own accord; and let them love that house of France as much as the paternal roof, and even more. If your mother cannot maintain you, if your father ill treat you, if you be naked or hungry, come, my dear son, the doors are all wide open, and France is on the threshold to embrace and welcome you. That great mother will never blush to undergo for your sake all the cares of a nurse; she will make for you with her own heroic hand the soldier's soup, and if she had not wherewith to cover and warm your little frozen limbs, she would even tear off a shred of her old flag!

Comforted, caressed, happy, and free in mind, let him receive upon those benches the food of truth. Let him know, above all, that God has shown him the favour to give him, for his native home, a land that proclaimed and sealed with her blood the law of divine equity and fraternity, and that the God of nations has spoken by France.

First of all, the country, as a dogma and a principle. Next, the country, as a legend: our two redemptions, by the holy Maid of Orleans and by the Revolution; the enthusiasm of '92; the miracle of the young flag; our young generals admired and mourned by the enemy; the purity of Marecau; the magnanimity of Hoche; the glory of Arcole and Austerlitz; Cæsar and the second Cæsar, in whom our greatest kings re-appeared still greater. Farther back still, the glory of our sovereign assemblies; the pacific and truly humane genius of '89, when France offered so heartily to all peace and liberty. Lastly, above all, as a last lesson, the immense faculty of devotedness and sacrifice displayed by our fathers, and how France has so often given her life for the world.

Child, let this be thy first Gospel, thy staff of life, the aliment of thy heart. Thou wilt remember it amid the toils and troubles into which necessity is about to cast thee. It will be a powerful cordial, which will come to comfort thee on many occasions. It will charm thy memory in long days of labour, in the *ennui* of the manufactory; thou wilt find it again in the deserts of Africa, as a remedy for thy home-sick heart, in thy wearisome marches and watchings, when standing a forlorn sentinel two steps from the barbarians.

The child will know the world, but he must first know himself,—the best part of himself,—I mean France. The rest he will learn from her. It will be for her to initiate him, and tell him her tra-

\* See M. Michelet's "Priests, Women, and Families." Longman and Co. London, 1845.

dition. She will tell him the three revelations she has received ; how Rome taught her the Just, Greece the Beautiful, and Judea the Holy. She will connect her last lesson with the first lesson that his mother gave him : the latter taught him *God*, and his great mother will teach him the dogma of love, — *God in Man*, — Christianity ; — and how love, impossible in the barbarous, malevolent times of the middle ages, *was inscribed in the laws*, by the Revolution, *so that the inward God of man might be manifested*.

If I was making a book on education, I would show how general education, suspended by special education (that of the college or the workshop), ought to be resumed under the flag by the young soldier. 'It is thus the country ought to pay him for the time he gives her. On his return home, she ought to follow him, not as a law only, to govern and punish him, but as a civil providence, — as a religious, moral culture, acting through the medium of assemblies, popular libraries, theatres, and *fêtes* of all kinds, and, above all, musical festivals.

How long will his education last ? Just as long as his life.

What is the first part of policy ? Education. The second ? Education. And the third ? Education. I have grown too old in history to believe in laws when they are not prepared, and when men have not been brought up long before to love and desire the law. Fewer laws, I beseech you ; but strengthen the principle of laws by education ; render them applicable and possible ; make men, and all will be well.\*

Politics promise us order, peace, and public security. But why all these blessings ? To enjoy, to sleep in an egotistical tranquillity, to relieve us from associating with and loving one another ? Let it perish, if that be its aim. As for me, I would rather believe that if this order, this grand social harmony, has an end and aim, it is to aid the advancement of liberty, to favour the promotion of all by all. Society ought to be only an initiation from birth to death, an education that embraces our life in this world, and prepares the life to come.

Education, a word so little understood, is not only the culture of the son by the father, but in the same, and occasionally in a greater degree, that of the father by the son. If we can recover from our moral decline, it is by our children, and for them, that we shall make the effort. The worst of all men wishes his son to be good ; he who

\* In a plan of a constitution, which we owe to Turgot, one of the greatest and best men that ever existed, before the State he founds the *commune*, and before the commune he founds man by education. That is admirable. Only let it be well understood, that the education given in the commune ought to emanate from the State, — the country. That is not a communal affair.

would make no sacrifice to humanity or to his country, still makes it to his family. If he has not lost, at once, moral sense and his senses, he pities that child who runs the risk of being like him. Search deeply into that soul ; all is spoilt and empty ; and yet, at the lowest depth, you will almost always find a solid bottom, paternal love.

Well ! in the name of our children, let us not, I beseech you, allow this, our country, to perish. Do you want to bequeath a shipwreck to them, and receive their malediction, — that of the whole future, and that of the world, lost, perhaps, for a thousand years, if France be undone !

You will save your children, and with them France, and the world, only in one way :—Found their faith.

Faith in devotedness, sacrifice, and the grand association, where all sacrifice themselves for all,—I mean, our native country.

I know very well that this is a difficult lesson, because words are not sufficient for it—there must be examples. The strength, the magnanimity of sacrifice, so common among our fathers, seems lost with us. This is the true cause of our evils, our hatred, and that inward discord which makes this country feeble to death, and which makes it the laughing stock of the world.

If I take aside the best, the most honourable men, and question them a little, I see that each of them, disinterested in appearance, has, at bottom, some trifle in reserve, which he would not sacrifice on any account. Ask him for every thing else. Many a one would give his life for France ; but would not give up an amusement, a habit, a vice.

There are, moreover, some pure men among the rich, whatever may be said to the contrary—but, among the proud ? Are they also pure ? Will they take off their gloves to lend a hand to the poor man, who is crawling along the rough path of fate ? And yet, I tell you, sir, if your white cold hand does not touch that strong, warm, and living one, it will perform no works of life.

Our habits, far dearer than our enjoyments, must, however, certainly be sacrificed in a short time. An age of warfare is coming on.

And the heart has its habits, its dear ties, which are now so well mingled in it, with its living fibres, that they are other living fibres. It is hard to pluck them out. I have felt this occasionally in writing this book, in which I have wounded more than one who was dear to me.

First, to those middle ages, in which I have passed my life, and whose touching, though impotent, aspirations I have reproduced in my histories, to them I was obliged to say, *adieu !* even to-day, when impure hands are dragging them from their tomb, and placing that stone before us to make us stumble on the path of the future.



Another religion, the humanitarian dream of philosophy, which thinks to save the individual by destroying the citizens, denying nations, and abjuring the native land, I have likewise sacrificed. The native country, my native country, can alone save the world.

From the poetic legend to logic, thence to faith to the heart, — such has been my road.

In that very heart and faith, I found many venerable and antique reminiscences that protested ; and friendships, the last obstacles, that could not stop me before my country in danger. May she accept this sacrifice ! All I have in this world — my affections — I offer up to her, and, to give to my country the grand name found by ancient France, I lay them on the altar of *universal friendship* !

THE END.

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